

LOVERS AND RULERS, THE REAL AND THE SURREAL: HARMONIC METAPHORS IN SILVIO RODRÍGUEZ'S SONGS

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Abstract

This article, which analyzes 136 of Silvio Rodríguez's songs and provides a close reading of seventeen, highlights musical patterns that recur in songs with similar themes across three periods: 1967-1970, when Rodríguez was censured; 1971-1989, when *nueva trova* became institutionalized; and post-1990, in Cuba's Special Period. Differing points of view or emotions are often set in sections in different keys ("Debo partirme en dos" (1969)); songs with a political message are set in simple repeating patterns ("Resumen de noticias" (1969)); and many of his love songs are highly chromatic or harmonically unstable ("Ojalá" (1969)). Double-plagal progressions often signify fatalism and never-ending struggle ("Sueño con serpientes" (1974), "Reino de todavía" (1994)). Analyses are complemented by Rodríguez's comments regarding his creative process.

Introduction

Over forty years after starting his career as a professional musician, Silvio Rodríguez remains one of the most popular songwriters of the Hispanic world. One of the founders of the *nueva trova*¹ movement, he has played to large stadium audiences in Spain, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Argentina, and other countries. Testimony to his enduring and widespread popularity includes attendance at his tours in Argentina and Mexico in 2005, where he sold out a four-concert engagement at Luna Park in Buenos Aires and played to an audience of over 80,000 in a free concert in the Zócalo of Mexico City (Vargas

2005). He has been decorated with several awards, including the Premio Latino a Toda una Vida (Lifetime Achievement Award) from the Academia de la Música española and the Premio Nacional de la Música of Cuba (*La Jornada* 2006).

Rodríguez and other *nueva trova* artists have inspired a number of books and articles addressing the history and sociopolitical background of the movement [Benmayor (1981), Fairley (1989), Díaz Pérez (1994a, b, 1995, 1996), Moore (2003, 2006)], Rodríguez's life [Casas (1984), Sanz (1992), Díaz

¹ Cuban song movement that gathered steam in the 1960s, affiliated with the *nueva canción* movement in Latin America.

Pérez (1993, 1995), Faulin (1995), Zapata (1996)], and song texts [Gutiérrez (1999), Shaw (2002)]. However, these works have not focused on the analysis of the music. Two analytical works-- Díaz Pérez's dissertation (1989) and León Ojeda's book (2005) --are also more focused on text or do not tie the analysis of the text to the music. Díaz Pérez's early work, which contains no transcriptions, focuses on compiling statistics on subject matter, text, and music under broad categories rather than the interaction of music and text in the songs; as mentioned above, her later work has concentrated on sociopolitical context and biography.² While León Ojeda's book (2005) contains transcriptions, it is primarily focused on analyzing the meter, assonance, and rhyme of the text, with few comments on the music and harmony. Hence, despite Rodríguez's international popularity, there has not been a thorough study of the harmonies of Rodríguez's songs and their interaction with the text.

Such neglect is not unique to Rodríguez. While the individual musical style of many classical composers has been thoroughly studied, analytical studies of the musical idiolects of popular musicians have been relatively rare. Only in the past fifteen years has the field of analyzing popular music become more widely accepted, with the publication of such books as Everett's *The Beatles as Musicians* (1999) or Covach's *Understanding Rock* (1997). However, this mantle has yet to be taken up for the vast repertoire of non-Anglo-American popular music.

In Rodríguez's case, such a study could provide insights into his songs for two reasons. First, the songwriter's creative process integrates both text and music from the outset. As he has said repeatedly in interviews, he often does *not* write the lyrics first and then set them to music. Instead, he writes both words and music simul-

taneously, and in fact, the harmonies more often occur to him first, upon which he sets the words. As he puts it:

Casi nunca trabajo un texto primero. Generalmente yo le pongo texto a la música que hago. En muy pocas ocasiones lo he hecho a la inversa y me cuesta mucho trabajo (Zapata 1996: 40).³

No tengo método fijo para componer. Lo más corriente es que lo haga a partir de lo que la guitarra me aconseja. A veces tomo notas -- tanto musicales como literarias -- y después las desarrollo. Uso bastante la grabadora, tengo un stock de temas musicales que ensancho casi cada día. Esto me ha permitido en ocasiones hacer una canción con una música archivada desde hace tiempo. . . (Casas 1984: 220-1)⁴

An example of a musical idea that predated the text is "Oh, Melancolía":

Esa canción tiene tres temas. Y los tres me aparecían atractivos. Estuve tres meses angulando la vuelta a ver como la organizaba. No sabía que tema poner antes o después. Primero tuve que organizarla musicalmente. De poco había organizado todo, tuve la estructura completa de la canción, le escribí la letra. Para que no tuve toda la estructura, no pude escribir la letra completa, porque los tres temas tenían algo que los conectaban, pero no sabía que idea poner primero (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁵

Rodríguez's reputation as a "poet who sings" notwithstanding, such a process of composition strongly suggest that the harmonies play an equal, if not greater, part in providing meaning to his songs.

Furthermore, the harmonic setting of Rodríguez's songs presents an interesting case study, given his history and position vis-à-vis the Cuban government. As Moore (2003) and Díaz Pérez (1996) have discussed, the songwriter, along with other members of the *nueva trova* movement, underwent a metamorphosis from a singer admired by fans but antagonized by authorities

2 Díaz Pérez categorizes twenty songs, divided into four periods (1966-1969, 1970-1974, 1975-the middle of 1984, and beyond), by subject matter; stance of the songwriter; rhyme and meter of the text; whether or not harmonies are conventional; whether time signatures are binary, ternary, or compound; and general melodic shape (descending, ascending, or equal). Her general conclusions are that songs in the two earlier periods featured more socially-oriented, discursive texts with harmonies that were conventional and melodies that were ascending, while the latter two periods featured more affective, nostalgia-driven texts of an introspective nature, with greater variety and less conventionality in harmonies. No musical transcriptions are included, in favor of melographs, rendering difficult an analysis of the interaction of text and music. The dissertation is available at the Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Música (CIDMUC) in Havana (Díaz Pérez 1989).

3 "I almost never work on the text first. Generally I put text to the music I've made. On very few occasions I've done it the other way around, and it's cost me much work."

4 "I don't have a fixed method of composing. The most common is that I write what my guitar advises me to do. Sometimes I take notes -- as many musical ones as literary ones -- and afterwards I develop them. I use tape recorders a lot, and I have a stock of musical themes that expands almost every day. This has let me on occasion to compose a song from music I archived a long time ago."

5 "This song has three themes. And the three seemed attractive to me. I spent three months angling it around to see how to organize the song. I didn't know which theme to put before and which to put after. I first had to organize it musically. Once everything had been organized, I had the complete structure of the song, and I wrote the text for it. If I didn't have the complete structure, I couldn't write the text because the three themes had something that connected them, but I wouldn't have known what idea to put where."

in the 1960s to a cultural ambassador for the Cuban government in the 1970s. As Moore has observed, the *trovadores* wrote fewer songs openly criticizing the government following their co-optation in the 1970s, but Rodríguez's works have been more difficult to evaluate, given the metaphorical nature of his texts (Moore 2003: 23). However, as I will demonstrate in this paper, Rodríguez has used certain harmonic and melodic patterns to depict particular emotions and states in a consistent manner throughout his career. These harmonic patterns provide clues as to the meaning of the text; they are metaphors in their own right, complementing and enhancing the text. These same techniques are also reflected in his songs in Cuba's Special Period of the 1990s, when, as an internationally-oriented popular musician, he returned to a more open style of social criticism.

In addition, the question of how a government can encourage or limit creativity is applicable to Rodríguez's case, as the government not only censured, then promoted him, but also provided him with training. While largely self-taught, Rodríguez benefited from musical training as part of the Grupo de Experimentación Sonora (GES) at the ICAIC film institute with Juilliard-trained composer and guitarist Leo Brouwer.⁶ This influence is evident in the refinement of harmonic techniques in his songs from the 1970s onwards, but the impact needs to be assessed against Rodríguez's earlier style, which shows a familiarity with idioms from classical, rock, and Cuban music. Finally, given Rodríguez's popularity as a songwriter, recognition as a poet, and influence on other songwriters, it is worth analyzing how text and music complement each other in his songs for a fuller appreciation of their artistic merits.

This paper will demonstrate how the harmonies and melodies in Rodríguez's songs contribute to the narrative of the text, not only by painting specific words with harmonic surprise, but also by providing musical metaphors. These devices, which often occur in pairs, include multipartite structures of songs, where one key represents one emotion or point of view, and another key, usually a relative or parallel major or minor, representing an opposite emotion or viewpoint. In another example, Rodríguez contrasts chromatic passages, modal mixture, and unresolved dominants, which often convey uncertainty, against diatonic passages of unam-

biguous tonality to depict truth or certainty. His most overtly political songs are often the simplest harmonically, lacking the harmonic turbulence of his more personal songs. Such musical devices bare some resemblance to, say, the setting of question vs. answer in Schubert Lieder in different keys, or the concepts of opposition, markedness, and topics discussed by Hatten (1995, 2004); hence, I am using the word "metaphor" broadly, to encompass a range of devices that seem to capture some meaning.

I will first present an overview of Rodríguez's songs and my methods of analysis, followed by a discussion of his early musical career, influences, and training. To illustrate how text and music interact in Rodríguez's songs, I will then provide a detailed analysis of seventeen songs, grouped by chronology and general subject matter. First, I will analyze political songs from 1967 to 1970, where I define "political" songs as those that comment on political figures ("Fusil contra fusil," "La era está pariendo un corazón," "Ese hombre") or Rodríguez's position in that environment ("Debo partirme en dos," "Resumen de noticias"). Next, I will analyze songs from the same period on personal subjects, such as love ("Ojalá," "Te doy una canción," "Aunque no esté de moda") or personal inspiration ("Al final de este viaje"). I will then follow with analyses of songs from the 1970s, largely written after the institutionalization of the *nueva trova* movement in late 1972, which refer to natural or surrealistic phenomena ("Mariposas," "Como esperando abril," "Sueño con serpientes," "La gaviota"). Finally, I will analyze his songs from the 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union; these songs provide commentary on political or social situations ("El necio," "Reino de todavía," "Flores nocturnas," "Abracadabra").

The socio-historical context for each group of songs is described at the beginning of each of these chronological sections. A summary at the end of each section reviews the musical devices used in each of these periods, with Rodríguez's comments about their source and usage. (Those readers more interested in conclusions than individual songs may wish to skip to these sectional introductions and summaries.) I will conclude by summarizing Rodríguez's methods of harmonic metaphor in the aggregate, reconciling these findings with the songwriter's creative process.

⁶ Brouwer (1939-) studied composition at Juilliard with Persichetti, Wolpe, and others. He was one of the leaders of the Cuban avant-garde music movement in the 1960s. (Eli Rodríguez 2006)

Overview of Rodríguez's songs and explanation of analytical methods

Rodríguez is said to have written well over 500 songs, of which 246 have appeared in at least one version in a commercial recording.⁷ Table 1 compiles analyses of 136 songs, listed in order of the year of composition. These songs exhibit an eclectic mix of styles that are mostly international, but some are identifiably Cuban. Of the sample, sixty-one percent of the songs have been recorded in styles with foreign influence, such as folk reminiscent of early, acoustic Bob Dylan or Victor Jara (30%); rock or folk-rock, with the guitar played with a harder strumming style with the mannerisms of rock (18%); and slow songs with chromatic harmonies reminiscent of German Lied or Italian art song, which I have labeled "Canción" (13%). In addition, about fifteen percent of songs, mostly recorded in the 1980s, are perhaps best described as pop. The remaining twenty-four percent of songs are in styles reflecting traditional Cuban genres, such as *vieja trova* (labeled "Trova," 5%), *son* or *timba* (7%), bolero (6%), and Latin jazz-pop (6%).⁸ At least a quarter of the songs in the sample feature rhythmic patterns that are characteristic of Cuban music, such as the hemiola, *tresillo*, *clave*, *cinquillo*, and anticipated bass, and as will be evident in the transcriptions to be presented later, Rodríguez's vocal melodies often anticipate the downbeat.⁹

As for harmonies, Rodríguez's songs in this sample tend to use Western common practice as a base, with modifications of modal mixture. Among the sample, 80% of songs (108 songs) contain prepared V-I cadences at the end (or liaising with the beginning) of a key section, as

in Western common practice; these songs also tend to feature modulations common in Western practice, such as those to the relative major or minor. In addition, six percent of songs have the V-IV-I cadence, common in Western popular music. Nine percent of songs are in the mixolydian mode, and ten percent feature VII-I or double plagal (VII-IV-I) cadences, as is common in rock music; there are also two examples of blues-like scales. On the other hand, occurrences of the Phrygian mode associated with Spanish music are few; five percent of songs end on V, as is common in Latin music (Manuel 2002), but feature V-I cadences at key points elsewhere in the song. Of the songs recorded in Cuban styles, eighty-three percent feature V-I cadences. Within this framework, Rodríguez injects a fair amount of modal mixture, particularly by substituting the parallel major or minor for IV, or using II# (V/V) rather than ii; these harmonies, which are also common in Cuban *vieja trova* (as well as the Beatles), usually do not differ in function from their diatonic equivalents.

Given that many of the songs are in an international style, and that the harmonies generally feature V-I cadences or modal practices also found in Anglo-American popular music, I have found it most useful to take the analytical methods used for rock, as described by Everett (1999) and Covach (1997), as a starting point for examining the harmonies in Rodríguez's music. Such methods are informed by Western common practice but also allow for harmonies that are a result of modal mixture and do not fit into the major or minor scale. In particular, I have adopted the Roman numeral

⁷ Díaz Pérez believes the total number of songs to be 800 (Díaz Pérez 2006, phone interview). Of the number of songs recorded, 19 have appeared only on the discontinued recording *Cuando digo futuro* (1977) or the unofficial recordings *El hombre extraño* (1995) or *Memorias* (1987).

⁸ These percentages are taken from the sample of 136 songs rather than the entire oeuvre of Rodríguez's recorded songs. This style designation is meant to give a general sense of the rhythms and textures given to the songs in commercial recordings and is not meant to specify the genre; e.g., songs designated as "son" may not have the largo and montuno format characteristic of a Cuban son, but contain rhythms associated with a son, such as a *tresillo* or *clave*, and may have improvisatory, repeated sections at the end that recall a *montuno* ("Rosana"). Often the orchestration of a recording may change the "style;" however, in comparing bootleg recordings on acoustic guitar of "Ese hombre," "Son desangrado," "Pioneros," etc., against commercial recordings released years later, I believe that the general spirit of the song, such as the primary rhythms and harmonies, have generally been retained. By "folk," I am referring to acoustic, pre-1965 Bob Dylan (e.g. "Girl from the North Country," "It Ain't Me Babe") or Victor Jara (e.g., "Te recuerdo Amanda," "Cuando voy al trabajo"). By "folk-rock," I am referring to music where the guitar is strummed more aggressively (e.g., Bob Dylan in *Blonde on Blonde*) or the guitar is electrified (e.g., the Byrds, "Turn! Turn! Turn!"). By "trova," I am referring to a picking style of *vieja trova* similar to, say, Trio los Veinte Años. By "bolero," I am referring to a slow song with a guitar playing chromatic passing chords more frequently than in the "folk" style (e.g., the songs of Marta Valdés or César Portillo de la Luz). By "timba," I am referring to the presence of salsa-like rhythms and bigger band instrumentation than for "son." There are many possible overlaps between my designations of folk, trova, and bolero; bolero and canción, jazz-pop and timba; and son and timba. Hence, I would expect many fans of Rodríguez to take issue with some of these classifications, and I merely put them forward for the purpose of illustrating the vast variety of styles among Rodríguez's recordings.

⁹ Noting a sounded pulse as "x" and an unsounded or held pulse as "-", a *tresillo* rhythm is x--x-x-; a *clave* is x--x--x/--x-x--; and a *cinquillo* is x-xx-xx-. An anticipated bass is a bass note that is sounded slightly before the downbeat of a measure where a harmonic change occurs (e.g., an eighth note before the downbeat in a 4/4 meter).

system to denote harmonies, as does Everett (1999: 309-313), despite the fact that the harmonies in Rodríguez's songs do not always have the same function as in Western common practice. Using Roman numerals has one clear advantage over chord names: a single song often has multiple recordings in different keys, as Rodríguez has been transposing his songs down over the years (Rodríguez 2006, interview). Roman numerals are one way of preserving the usefulness of the analysis, given changes in absolute pitches.

For each song analyzed in depth, I have provided the chord charts and lyrics of the whole song, along with transcriptions of key moments. I have set the key, harmonies, melody, and rhythms according to a particular recording, which I have noted on the chord chart.¹⁰ In addition to the chords, the charts note the occurrences of perfect and imperfect authentic cadences (PAC and IAC, respectively) as well as half cadences (HC).¹¹ Finally, as Rodríguez has said that he purposefully includes unexpected harmonies, sequences, and inflections to highlight words (Rodríguez 2006, interview), I have created a color-coded guide to these harmonic surprises: harmonies lying outside of the primary scale or mode of the song are highlighted in **green**,¹² while deceptive cadences are in **yellow**.

Rodríguez's songs follow a wide variety of forms, which I have analyzed using Covach's definitions as a guideline (Covach 2004). Such labeling of different sections of a song was deemed appropriate, as many of Rodríguez's songs have international influences; on the other hand, only four percent of the songs in the sample follow the bipartite pattern of many traditional Cuban forms, where the first theme is generally not reprised once the song has moved on to the second theme. Just over half of the songs in the sample are in the verse-chorus format or a variation therein. However, some of the choruses do not follow some conventions of the format; in particular, the original text of the chorus is often not repeated in its entirety in the second chorus (e.g. in "Te doy una canción"). In such cases, I have labeled as the

chorus the most dramatic section of the song, usually involving the highest melodic pitches, loudest dynamic, and a strumming style reminiscent of power chords in rock, often with a text that mentions the title.¹³ Variations of the verse-chorus format include the insertion of a pre-chorus, a relatively short section that serves as a transition from verse to chorus; a lift, a build-up to the pre-chorus; or a bridge, a contrasting section that often modulate and often end in the dominant, returning to the verse or chorus. Seventeen percent of songs contain bridges without choruses or refrains; as a bridge is not the primary focus of a song, the verse-bridge song is distinct from a verse-chorus song. Nine percent of songs contain refrains, which are song hooks embedded at the end of a verse, often with the text of the song title, but are too short or not sufficiently differentiated from the verse to be choruses (e.g., "I Want to Hold Your Hand" by the Beatles, "Y nada más"). Strophic songs without choruses, bridges, or refrains are also a common format, making up eighteen percent of the sample; many of these songs tell a story or state a philosophical point of view.

As many of Rodríguez's songs are highly polysemic and metaphorical, their texts are highly difficult to categorize. Nonetheless, about half of the songs in the sample appear biographical in nature, referring to his childhood, loves, moods, everyday occurrences, family, or role as a songwriter. About a quarter contain commentary on political events, socioeconomic circumstances, or Rodríguez's position within these contexts. About nine percent are about specific individuals, including political figures, musicians, artists, and acquaintances, whereas about nineteen percent are philosophical in nature. All translations of lyrics are mine, unless otherwise noted; in cases where a word has two or more meanings that are relevant to the song, I have noted them in parentheses. Likewise, all interpretations of the meaning of the texts are mine, unless otherwise noted.

Rodríguez was born into a musical family: his grand mother and mother were amateur singers with a reper-

¹⁰ All transcriptions and analyses are mine unless otherwise noted. 143 of Rodríguez's songs have been included in the four-volume *Antología*, which contains piano-vocal scores and guitar chords (Rodríguez 2004, 2005). However, these scores were not notated by Rodríguez himself but are transcriptions by Martha Duarte. While Duarte has done an admirable job of catching the off-beat rhythms of Rodríguez's singing, I disagree with several of the key signatures, meters, chords, bass notes, and melodic pitches she has chosen; in addition, many of her transcriptions are in different keys from the recordings to which I have referred. Hence, my analyses, transcriptions, and tables do not match that of the scores in the *Antología*.

¹¹ I am using William Caplin's definition of a perfect authentic cadence as a cadential sequence with dominant preparation (often a IV or ii), dominant with the bass in root position, and tonic in root position with the soprano line or melody finishing on the first scale degree. The perfect authentic cadence is the strongest confirmation of a key. An imperfect authentic cadence has the same elements as a perfect authentic cadence, except that the melody does not finish on the first scale degree. A half cadence is similarly prepared as an authentic cadence but culminates on the dominant, in root position, without the seventh (Caplin 1998: 23-31).

¹² I.e., for a major scale, harmonies outside of I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, and viio; for a minor scale, harmonies outside of i, iio, III, iv, v or V, VI, and VII or viio; and for a mixolydian scale, harmonies outside of I, ii, iiio, IV, v, vi, VII (assumed to be bVII). I have not highlighted some cases where a II# is substituted for ii and acts as dominant preparation.

Rodríguez's musical training and early career

tory of Spanish and Cuban songs, and his uncle played bass in the jazz band Mambí and wrote songs. As a toddler, he took to singing along with the radio, and at the age of three, he participated in the song contest "Buscando estrellas" by the radio company CMQ, singing the Mexican bolero "Viajera" (Díaz Pérez 1995: 13). At the age of seven, he studied piano, music theory, and solfège for several months at the Conservatory La Milagrosa in Havana, where he earned high marks and learned to play a simplified version of Ernesto Lecuona's "La Malagueña." However, because of family instability and a penchant for more boyish activities, these lessons did not continue (Díaz Pérez 1995: 17).

In 1964, as a seventeen-year-old in military service, Rodríguez bought an old guitar and was taught some chords by fellow young amateurs. He quickly took to writing his own songs and singing them to other soldiers in the barracks; he eventually came to perform in official military festivals (Díaz Pérez 1995: 43-44). By 1966, he had already written songs with political messages, such as "Por qué," about racial discrimination in the United States, and "La leyenda del águila," about the Vietnam War.

After being discharged from military service, Rodríguez continued to hone his songwriting skills in association with a group of young poets who gathered at Coppelia in Havana, participating in joint concerts. He quickly became a well-known songwriter. In 1967, he debuted on television in the "Caras nuevas" section of the television program "Música y Estrellas," and in 1968, he became the central figure of the short-lived program "Mientras Tanto" (Díaz 1995: 67, 80). From February 1968 onwards, he, Pablo Milanés, and Noel Nicola were featured in monthly concerts in the Encuentro de la Canción Protesta at the Casa de las Américas, under the leadership of Haydée Santamaría. Some of these performances were televised (Díaz Pérez 1995: 92-93).

By the late 1960s, Rodríguez had already written an impressive list of songs, including many for which he remains most famous. Such songs include "Fusil contra fusil" (1968) and "La era está pariendo un corazón" (1968), which exhibit several of the hallmarks of his songwriting technique. Without the benefit of formal training, he had written songs that are harmonically

complex, such as the chromatically expressive "Esta canción" (1967) or the harmonically varied "La familia, la propiedad privada y el amor" (1968). Essentially self-taught, he drew upon diverse influences including *vieja trova* singers such as Sindo Garay and María Teresa Vera, boleros such as those by César Portillo de la Luz and Marta Valdés, Western rock such as the Beatles, Italian song, and classical music, such as symphonic music by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Rachmaninoff, Mozart, and Vivaldi (Rodríguez 2006, interview).

Conflicts with authorities

During this time, Rodríguez ran afoul of some authorities in the cultural ministries. As he recounted:

En aquella época yo tenía muchos problemas con algunos sectores de la cultura . . . estuve suspendido de la radio, de la televisión, no se me llamaba a actividades. . . en todas aquellas manifestaciones se veía la penetración enemiga: fue la época de la ofensiva revolucionaria . . . (Díaz Pérez 1995: 112-113).¹⁴

This *ofensiva*, launched in 1968, was a nationalization of all economic activities as Cuba adopted a system modeled on the Soviet Union, on whose aid it had become dependent; the movement was accompanied by an ideological atmosphere that was intolerant toward dissent. From 1968 to the early 1970s, Cuban intellectuals and artists found themselves prone to being blacklisted or sent to labor camps (Moore 2006: 147-149). Music associated with the United States, particularly rock, was viewed as decadent for its association with capitalistic or alternative lifestyles, and was censored (Moore 2006: 150). Accordingly, Rodríguez was suspended from radio and television broadcasts for his acknowledgement of the influence of the Beatles on his style, in addition to his appearance and the alleged meaning of his songs (Díaz Pérez 1995: 87-88). He was rumored to have spent time at the Unidad Militar de Ayuda a la Producción, an organization whose purpose was to re-educate individuals of "alienating behavior" on revolutionary principles (Díaz Pérez 1996: 237).

Such difficulties were a large contributor to Rodríguez's leaving Cuba for a trip on the fishing boats *Playa Girón*

14 "In those times, I had many problems with some sectors of the cultural (ministries). I was suspended from radio and television, and I wasn't invited to activities. People saw the penetration of the enemy everywhere. It was the period of the revolutionary offensive."

and *Océano Pacífico* from September, 1969, to January, 1970. As Rodríguez put it:

En los últimos dos años había trepado a una montaña rusa vivencial que me había conducido casi a la locura, y el hilo del que pendía mi existencia se tensaba peligrosamente (Rodríguez 1996: 12).¹⁵

This trip appears to have played an important role in the consolidation of his musical style. He was allowed on the boat not to fish, but ostensibly to entertain the fishermen. Isolated in the middle of the ocean with memories of the country, past loves, and struggles, this time of

reflection allowed him to be extremely productive. In his five months at sea, he wrote sixty-two songs, many of which remain among his most popular today (Rodríguez 1996: 226). As I will demonstrate, these songs show a considerable command of harmonic, motivic, and rhythmic techniques, some which recall those in classical and rock music, and others which are delightfully experimental.

Trans

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¹⁵ "In the last two years I had been on a roller coaster, an experience that had almost led me to madness, and the string on which my existence was hanging was dangerously stretched" (Rodríguez 1996: 12).

Table I-Sample of Silvio Rodríguez's songs

Song	Date Composed	Form	Time	Accompaniment		Harmonies			Recording	Date of Recording	Subject
				Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences			
El viento eres tú	1965	Verse-Bridge-Verse	6/8	Trova	Hemiola	Minor	III (Bridge)	V-I	Dominquez	1996	Love
Y nada más	1965	Verse with Refrain	4/4	Folk-rock		Minor	III (nada más)	iv-i; VII-i	Mujeres	1978	Solitude (during military service)
Canción de la trova	1967	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Trova		Major		V-I	Érase que se era	2006	Tribute (Sindo Garay)
	1967	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Major		V-I	Causas y azares, Silvio en Chile II	1986	Childhood (oppression)
Ese hombre	1967	Strophic	6/8	Folk		Major		V-IV-I	Expedición	2002	Critique (leadership)
Esta canción	1967	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Minor	III (Chorus), temporary at bVII/III	V-i	Días y flores	1975	Melancholy (Lying)
Quédate	1967	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Minor		V-I	Expedición	2002	Love
Al final de la segunda luna	1968	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk		Phrygian (with Major)	Parallel major (middle of verse)	VI-i, bII-i	Mariposas	1999	Philosophical (life)
El pintor de las mujeres soles	1968	Verse-Bridge-Verse'	4/4	Folk	Tresillo	Major	iii (Bridge)	V-I	Causas y azares	1986	Elegy (Pepe Masiques)
Fusil contra fusil	1968	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Rock		Minor	III (implied)	VII-i; VI-I	Cuando digo futuro, Memorias, Érase que se era	1977	Elegy (Che)
La era está pariendo un corazón	1968	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Major		V-I	Cuando digo futuro, Al final de este viaje	1977	Elegy (Che), disillusionment
La Familia, la propiedad privada y el amor	1968	Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus	12/8	Folk		Minor/Major	III	VI-VII-i	Al final de este viaje	1978	Critique (society)
¿Qué hago ahora?	1969	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk-rock		Major		V-I, V-IV-I	Mujeres	1978	Love lost
Aunque no esté de moda	1969	Verse-Lift-Prechorus-Chorus	4/4	Rock		Minor	III (BCD)	V-I	Al final de este viaje	1978	Love (eroticism)
Boga boga	1969	Verse-Refrain-Bridge1-Bridge2-Verse-Refrain	4/4	Son		Major	vi (Bridge)	V-I	Causas y azares	1986	Fishermen

Song	Date Composed	Form	Accompaniment			Harmonies				Recording	Date of Recording	Subject
			Time	Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences	Comment			
Boga boga	1969	Verse-Refrain- Bridge1- Bridge2- Verse-Refrain	4/4	Son		Major	vi (Bridge)	V-I	Slow F#m section in bridge- uncertainty while at sea	Causas y azares	1986	Fishermen
Canción del elegido	1969	Strophic	4/4	Folk	Tresillo	Major		ii-I; V65-I in strophe	Substitution of VI#	Al final de este viaje	1978	Elegy (Abel Santamaría)
Cuando digo futuro	1969	Intro-Verse- Refrain- Bridge-Verse- Refrain	4/4	Timba	Tresillo	Major		V-I (bridge- verse, end)	bVI in refrain	Cuando digo futuro, Causas y azares	1977	Philosophical (future)
Debo partirme en dos	1969	Verse-Refrain- Verse- Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Minor	III (Refrain)	V-I	simplistic Bb section for parody, Gm with bII and unresolved V/Bb in rest of song	Al final de este viaje	1978	Critique (censorship, authority, banality)
Hallazgo de las piedras	1969	Strophic	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I	Substitution of II#; extended pedal on V	Causas y azares	1986	Childhood
Historia de las sillas	1969	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	II#; diminished passing chords	Silvio y Pablo en Argentina, Causas y azares	1984	Life's difficulties
La primera mentira	1969	Verse- Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major	E-C#-Eb-C-A- G#m-F#m-B- E	V-I		Unicornio	1982	Childhood (enchanted forest)
Ojalá	1969	Verse- Prechorus- Chorus	6/8	Folk-rock		Minor	Chorus (VII)	V-I	Verse (obsession) in Dm, Chorus (wish to forget) C Major; iv substituted for IV	Cuando digo futuro, Al final de este viaje, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina	1977	Love, obsession
Playa Girón	1969	Strophic	12/8	Folk-rock		Major		V-I	Substitution of II# (me urge)	Días y flores	1975	Message (writing own history)
Que se puede hacer con el amor?	1969	Chorus- Verse	2/4	Folk-rock		Mixolydian	iv (verse)	VII-I, V-I		Al final de este viaje	1978	Love
Al final de este viaje en la vida	1970	Verse-Bridge- Refrain	6/8	Folk-rock		Major		V-I	Rising and falling diminished- chord sequences, after which HC (Dios/intactos)	Al final de este viaje	1978	Hope after difficult times
Canción en harapos	1970	Verse- Chorus	4/4 (6/8)	Jazz-pop		Dorian		IV-(v)-i		Causas y azares, Silvio en Chile I	1986	Critique (hypocrisy, posessions)
Canto arena	1970	Verse- Chorus	6/8	Jazz-pop		Major		V-I, VI-VII-I	io/II# as passing chord	Causas y azares	1986	Philosophical (life)

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Song	Date Composed	Form	Accompaniment		Harmonies				Recording	Date of Recording	Subject
			Time	Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences			
El rey de flores	1970	Verse-Chorus	6/8	Folk		Major		V-I			Philosophical (allegory about oppressed countries)
En el jardín de la noche	1970	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Major		V-I	Oh, melancolía, Silvio en Chile II	1988	Love (garden)
En estos días	1970	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Mujeres	1978	Critique (oppression)
Esto no es una elegía	1970	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk		Minor	III, VI (Bridge)	V-I	Mujeres	1978	Love (nostalgia for a woman)
La vergüenza	1970	Verse with Refrain-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Canción	Tresillo	Major		V-I	Días y flores	1975	Critique (materialism)
Oleo de mujer con sombrero	1970	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Al final de este viaje, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina	1978	Love lost
Resumen de noticias	1970	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Al final de este viaje	1978	Critique (censorship)
Río	1970	Verse-Chorus plus contrasting section	6/8	Folk		Major	ii, vi (temporary)	V-I	Mujeres	1978	Philosophical (optimism)
Te doy una canción	1970	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Major	vi (temporary)	V-I	Mujeres, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina	1978	Love lost
El tren blindado	1971	Verse with Refrain-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Pop		Minor		V-i	Triptico I	1984	Love, revolution
El papalote	1972	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-pop	Hemiola, introduction	Major		V-I	Memorias, Érase que se era	1987	Childhood (memory)
Mariposas	1972	Verse-Prechorus-Chorus	4/4	Folk		Mixolydian	VII, v	V-I (few)	Mariposas	1999	Nature (reincarnation, memory)
El Mayor	1973	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop	Tresillo, anticipated bass (chorus)	Major		V-I	Días y flores	1975	Elegy (Mayor General Ignacio Agramonte y Loynaz)
Santiago de Chile	1973	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop	Tresillo in bass	Minor		V-i	Días y flores, Silvio en Chile II	1975	Events (Chilean coup)
¿Adónde van?	1974	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Mujeres	1978	Nostalgia
Días y flores	1974	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-pop		Major		V-I	Días y flores, Mariposas	1975	Message (love vs. anger at evil)

Song	Date Composed	Form	Time	Accompaniment		Harmonies			Recording	Date of Recording	Subject
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En el claro de la luna	1974	Verse- Chorus	4/4	Canción	Tresillo, clave	Minor		V-I	Días y flores	1975	Longing for love/freedom
Pequeña serenata diurna	1974	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Minor		V-I	Días y flores, Silvio en Chile I	1975	Philosophical (life)
Sueño con serpientes	1974	Verse- Chorus	4/4	Rock		Mixolydian		VII-IV-I	Días y flores	1975	Dream (endless struggles)
Yo digo que las estrellas	1974	Verse- Prechorus- Chorus- Verse	4/4	Folk-rock		Minor	III (part B)	V-I	Días y flores	1975	Nature, hypocrisy
Como esperando Abril	1975	Chorus- Bridge-Verse- Chorus	4/4	Pop	Anticipate d Bass	Major	i (B)	V-I	Días y flores	1975	Nature, life
Mujeres	1975	Intro-Verse- Refrain- Intro/Chorus- Verse	6/8	Folk-rock	Hemiola	Mixolydian	V (Chorus)	VII-IV-I	Mujeres	1978	Feminism (homage to women)
Sólo el amor	1975	Verse-Refrain	4/4	Canción/s on	Tresillo	Major		V-IV-I	Causas y azares, Silvio en Chile II	1986	Philosophical (love)
Testamento	1975	Intro-Verses	4/4	Folk-rock		Major		V-I	Rabo de nube	1980	Message
Aceitunas	1976	Chorus- Verse-Bridge- Chorus	4/4	Folk (Angolan)	Angolan guitar	Mixolydian		VII-I, bIII-I	Mujeres	1978	Love
Canción para mi soldado	1976	Chorus- Verse	4/4	Son	Tresillo, anticipate d bass, guajeros	Major	vi (temporary)	V-I	Triptico III	1984	Message (soldiers)
La gaviota	1976	Verse- Prechorus- Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Major/Min or	III	lack PACs	Unicornio	1982	War
Pioneros	1976	Verse-Bridge- Verse	3/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Unicornio	1982	Message (soldiers)
Que ya viví, que te vas	1976	Intro- Verse/Refrain	4/4	Canción		Minor		V-I	Rabo de nube	1980	Love lost
Ángel para un final	1977	Verse- Chorus	12/8	Canción		Minor	III (chorus)	V-I	Triptico II	1984	Love lost
Con diez años de menos	1977	Intro-Verse- Refrain	4/4	Pop		Mixolydian		V-I (Intro- Verse)	Rabo de nube	1980	Change in times; love

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Song	Date Composed	Form	Time	Accompaniment		Mode	Modulations	Harmonies		Recording	Date of Recording	Subject
				Style	Rhythms			Cadences	Comment			
Quién tiene viejo el corazón	1977	Verse-Bridge-Verse2-Verse2-Bridge	4/4	Trova	Tresillo	Minor	III in chorus	V-I		Mariposas	1999	Love
Fábula de tres hermanos	1978	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Ends on V	Rabo de nube	1980	Philosophical (life)
Nuestro tema	1978	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Major		V-I	Substitution of iv	Triptico I	1984	Love
Rabo de nube	1978	Strophic	4/4	Canción		Major	IV (temporary)	iv-ib; V-I at ending instrument	Shifts to vi; diminished chords as neighbor chords; circle of fifths	Rabo de nube, Silvio en Chile II	1980	Childhood
Tu imagen	1978	Bipartite	4/4, 6/8	Folk		Minor		VI-I		Descartes	1998	Love
Vamos a andar	1978	Verse-Bridge-Montuno	4/4	Folk-son	Tresillo	Major		V-I	chorus repeats with call-and-response between refrain and lyrics, as in montuno	Rabo de nube	1980	Philosophical (collectivity)
Hay quién precisa	1979	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Major		V-I (Outro); Chorus ends on V/vi	Circle of fifths sequence, chorus	Oh, melancolla	1988	Philosophical
Hoy mi deber	1979	Bipartite	4/4	Canción		Minor		V-I	Circle of fourths (VI-III-VII-IV), as reminisces about lover, A Minor as talks about obligations	Unicornio	1982	Love vs. obligation
La maza	1979	Verse-Chorus	6/8	Chacarera		Minor		V-I	Substitute iv for IV; chromatically descending bass from Am(i)-E(III6-V); Chorus repeats i-VII-VI-V-i	Unicornio, Silvio en Chile I	1982	Songwriting (role as songwriter)
Me acosa el carapáida	1979	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Jazz-pop	Tresillo	Mixolydian		V-I	bVII	Triptico III	1984	Critique (imperialism)
Te amaré	1979	Verse-Chorus-Verse	6/8	Canción		Minor	III (Chorus)	V-i		Rabo de nube	1980	Love
Venga la Esperanza	1979	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		Silvio en Chile II	1991	Hope
Canción urgente para Nicaragua	1980	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk	Anticipated bass; Tresillo in bridge	Major		V-I	Repeating progressions in verse; Ends on V	Unicornio, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina	1982	Message (solidarity with Sandinistas)

Song	Composed	Form	Time	Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences	Comment	Recording	Recording	Subject
El trovador de barro negro	1980	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Bolero		Minor	III (Verse)	V-I	Many diminished neighbor chords	Descartes	1998	Songwriting
La gota de rocío	1980	Strophic	4/4	Son	Tresillo	Major		V-I	repeats between I, IV, V	Triptico III	1984	Love
Si seco un llanto	1980	Verse-Chorus	9/8	Folk		Major		V-I (at end)		Dominguez	1996	Philosophical
Son desangrado	1980	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Timba, rock progressions	Tresillo	Minor		IV-bII-i	rock progressions (III-IV, VI-V-IV)	Unicornio	1982	Philosophical
Yo soy de donde hay un río	1980	Strophic (décima)	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		Oh, melancolia	1988	Tribute (grandfather)
El dulce abismo	1981	Verse with Refrain	4/4	Trova		Major	ii	V-I	II#, VI#, and other substitutions as dominants to diatonic chords	Triptico II	1984	Love (domestic)
El sol no da de beber	1981	Verse-Chorus	12/8	Pop		Major	ii, vi	V-I	Chromatic passing chords, bVI	Unicornio	1982	Philosophical (sharing)
Esta primavera	1981	Bipartite	4/4	Bolero		Major		V-I		Mariposas	1999	Love
Por quién merece amor	1981	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		Unicornio, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina, Silvio en Chile I	1982	Message (solidarity against imperialism)
Unicornio	1981	Strophic	4/4	Bolero		Major		V-I	bVI (pagaré)	Unicornio, Silvio y Pablo en Argentina, Silvio en Chile II	1982	Loss (friendship, inspiration)
Domingo rojo	1982	Bipartite (AAB/CBC)	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I	Falling fifths sequence, iv-bVII-bIII-bVI-bII-ii-V-I in part C (puertas/enamorado)	Triptico I	1984	Celebration (life)
El tiempo está a favor de los pequeños	1982	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Jazz-pop		Mixolydian		VII-I	Simple, diatonic	Triptico II	1984	Message (solidarity with El Salvador)
Hombre	1982	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Trova		Major		V-I		Silvio	1992	Elegy (Che)
Mi lecho esta tendido	1982	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Canción		Major	iii (momentary)	V-I	Neighbor chords in iv; chromatic sequences leading to Bm, other related keys	Triptico I, III	1984	Love lost
El reparador de sueños	1983	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		Triptico II	1984	Childhood
El vigia	1983	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Bolero		Major	vi	V-I	Ends on VI (Picardy third)	Triptico II	1984	Songwriting (waiting for inspiration)
Yo te quiero libre	1983	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major		IV-(I-II#)-I	Circle of fifths	Triptico III	1984	Need for freedom

Song	Date Composed	Form	Time	Accompaniment		Mode	Harmonies			Recording	Date of Recording	Recording
				Style	Rhythms		Modulations	Cadences	Comment			
Canción de invierno	1984	Strophic	4/4	Pop		Mixolydian		VII-I		<i>Triptico I</i>	1984	Love
Monólogo	1984	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I		<i>Silvio</i>	1992	Tribute (old friend)
No hacen falta alas	1984	Intro-Bridge-Verse-Bridge-Verse-Intro	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		<i>Causas y azares</i>	1986	Philosophical (simplicity)
Réquiem	1984	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Canción		Minor	III	V-I	emphasis on bII; diminished chords as applied dominants; Verse has chromatically declining bass line; ends on V	<i>Causas y azares</i>	1986	Love lost
Sueño de una noche de verano	1984	Strophic (with tag)	4/4	Pop		Major		V-I		<i>Causas y azares, Silvio en Chile II</i>	1986	Critique (watchfulness for US attack)
Te conozco	1984	Verse-Chorus	6/8	Pop		Major	vi (temporary)	V-I		<i>Causas y azares</i>	1986	Love
Tu fantasma	1984	Verse-Bridge	4/4	Folk		Major	bIII in part 1	VII-VI-I		<i>Triptico III</i>	1984	Love lost
Causas y azares	1986	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Timba	Guajeros, etc.	Major	vi (Chorus)	V-I, VI-VII-I		<i>Causas y azares, Silvio en Chile I</i>	1986	Philosophical (fate)
Con un poco de amor	1986	Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Verse-Chorus	4/4	Jazz-pop	Cinquillo	Major		V-I	Verse in V, Chorus in I; chromatically descending bass line in chorus	<i>Oh, melancolia</i>	1988	Philosophical (love)
Locuras	1986	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Bolero		Major		V-I	passing/neighbor chords on bVII, bIII	<i>Oh, melancolia</i>	1988	Philosophical (life)
Compañera	1987	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Substitution of iv in some places	<i>Silvio</i>	1992	Songwriting
Cuando yo era un enano	1987	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Jazz-pop		Major		V-I	II# at end of second line of Verse; chorus, V# at end of Verse	<i>Oh, melancolia</i>	1988	Childhood
Eva	1987	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Pop		Major		V-i		<i>Oh, melancolia</i>	1988	Feminism
Oh, melancolia	1987	Verse-Bridge-Chorus-Verse	4/4	Canción		Major	Chorus plays same/similar sequence in E, F#, Ab, Bb	V-I	Starts with 2nd movement Adagio Cantabile of Beethoven's Pathétique Piano Sonata; many progressions by thirds; uses common-tone progression from Eb->B to get back to E, tonic	<i>Oh, melancolia, Silvio en Chile II</i>	1988	Melancholy

Song	Date Composed	Form	Accompaniment		Harmonies			Recording	Date of Recording	Recording
			Time	Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences		
Sueño valseado	1987	Bipartite	4/4, 3/4	Son (pt 2)	Tresillo (pt 2)	Major		V-I		<i>Mariposas</i>
Canción de navidad	1988	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I		<i>Rodríguez</i>
El extraño caso de las damas de África	1988	Verse-Montuno	4/4	Afropop		Major		V-I, V-IV-I		<i>Oh, melancolía</i>
En busca de un sueño	1988	Verse-Bridge	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I		<i>Descartes</i>
Entre el espanto y la ternura	1988	Strophic	6/8	Choral		Minor	VI, III	V-I		<i>Oh, melancolía</i>
Esta es la vida	1988	Verse-Bridge-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-End	4/4	Folk-rock		Mixolydian	V (Chorus)	V-I		<i>Descartes</i>
La Resurrección	1988	Strophic	4/4	Jazz-pop		Minor		iv-VI-i		<i>Silvio en Chile II</i>
El problema	1989	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Minor	III	V/III-iB4; IACs for other keys		<i>Rodríguez</i>
El necio	1991	Verse-Chorus	6/8	Folk-rock		Minor	III (Chorus)	iv-i, #iv-o-i, bII-i		<i>Silvio</i>
Flores nocturnas	1991	Verse-Chorus	6/8	Folk		Mixolydian		V-I		<i>Rodríguez</i>
Y Mariana	1991	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock		Major		V-I		<i>Silvio</i>
Abracadabra	1992	Verse-Prechorus-Chorus-Verse	12/8	Folk		Dorian/Major		V-I (reentry into verse)		<i>Silvio</i>
La desilusión	1992	Verse with Refrain	12/8	Folk		Major	IV, vi	V-I		<i>Silvio</i>
Quién fuera	1992	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I		<i>Silvio</i>
Trova de Edgardo	1992	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Trova	Tresillo	Major		V-I		<i>Silvio</i>
Casiopea	1993	Verse (ABA)-Bridge / Verse	4/4	Trova	Tresillo	Major		V-I		<i>Rodríguez</i>
Del sueño a la poesía	1993	Bipartite	6/8	Folk		Major		ii-I-V		<i>Rodríguez</i>

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Song	Date Composed	Form	Accompaniment		Harmonies				Recording	Date of Recording	Recording
			Time	Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences			
Desnuda y con sombra	1993	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Folk	Tresillo	Major		V-I	Rodriguez	1994	Love (eroticism)
Escaramujo	1993	Verse-Prechorus-Chorus	4/4	Folk-rock	Anticipated bass	Major		V-I	Rodriguez	1994	Childhood (questioning)
La vida	1993	Verse-Bridge-Verse	6/8	Bolero		Major		V-I	Rodriguez	1994	Philosophical (life)
Debo	1994	Verse-Bridge-Verse	4/4	Trova		Minor	I (parallel Major, Bridge)	V-I	Rodriguez	1994	Philosophical (simplicity)
Reino de todavía	1994	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Folk/Rock (Chorus)	Tresillo	Mixolydian		v-VII-I	Dominguez	1996	Critique (encroaching capitalism)
Ala de colibri	1995	Verse-Chorus (with improvised refrain)	4/4	Folk		Major		V-I	Dominguez	1996	Philosophical (inclusivity, community); reference to song sung by Garay
Vida y otras cuestiones	1995	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Bolero		Major		V-I	Descartes	1998	Philosophical (life)
Me quieren	1996	Strophic	4/4	Blues		Blues scale		V-IV-I	Dominguez	1996	Demands (critics, fans)
Paladar	1996	Verse-Chorus	4/4	Bolero		Major		V-I	Dominguez	1996	Critique (Special Period, high prices)
Se demora	1996	Verse-Bridge-Chorus-Tag	6/8	Pop		Major		V-I	Dominguez	1996	Personal (annoyances)
Rosana	1997	Strophic (montuno tag)	4/4	Son	Tresillo in bass, clave in 2nd verse, modified cinquillo in guitar	Minor		V-i	Descartes	1998	Love lost
Derecho humano	1999	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major	ii	V-I	Mariposas	1999	Personal (right to be treated as a human rather than a star)
Olivia	1999	Strophic	4/4	Folk		Major		V-IV-I	Mariposas	1999	Solitude

Song	Date Composed	Form	Accompaniment			Harmonies			Recording	Date of Recording	Recording Critique
			Style	Rhythms	Mode	Modulations	Cadences	Comment			
Y tantos huesos chocaran	1999	Verse- Prechorus- Chorus	Folk	Tresillo	Blues scale		bIII-bVII-IV-I	bVI in Verse	Mariposas	1999	
Expedición	2000	Verse- Chorus	Canción		Major		V-I		Expedición	2002	Events (Elián González)
Totí	2002	A-B-C- Chorus	Son	Tresillo	Major		V-I	A has double plagal	Expedición	2002	Nature (Bird)
Cita con ángeles	2003	Strophic	Folk		Major		V-IV-I, bVII- V65-I	bVII; melodic descent; repeating progression;	Cita con ángeles	2003	Events (assassinations)

Songs of political commentary, 1960s

"Fusil contra fusil" ("Weapon against Weapon," 1968); in *Cuando digo futuro, Memorias*, and *Érase que se era*

Verse: i=E Dorian (0:12)

Em	G	Am	Bm
i	III	iv	v
El silencio del monte va			
C	G	A	D
VI	III	IV	VII
Preparando su adiós.			
Em	G	Am	Bm
i	III	iv	v
La palabra que se dirá			
C	G	A	D
VI	III	IV	VII
In memoriam será la explosión.			

Chorus: i=E Dorian (0:40)

Em	D	Em
i	VII	i
Se perdió el nombre de este siglo allí.		
D	Em	
VII	i	
Su nombre y su apellido son:		
D	E	
VII	I	
Fusil contra fusil.		
G	A	G
III	IV	III
Se quebró la cáscara del viento al sur,		
A	G	
IV	III	
Y sobre la primera cruz.		
A	C	E
IV	VI	I
Despierta la verdad.		
(Em-G-D-Bm-C-G-D-A-D)		

Verse) Todo el mundo tercero va
A enterrar su dolor.
Con granizo de plomo harán
Su agujero de honor, su canción.

Chorus) Dejarán el cuerpo de la vida allí.
Su nombre y su apellido son:
Fusil contra fusil
Cantarán su luto de hombre y de animal,
Y en vez de lágrimas echar
Con plomo llorarán.

Em	D	Em
i	VII	i
Alzarán al hombre de la tumba al sol,		
D	Em	
VII	i	
Y el nombre se repartirán:		
D	E	
VII	I	
Fusil contra fusil,		
D	E	
VII	I	
Fusil contra fusil,		
D	C - B	E (PAC)
VII	VI - V	I
Fusil contra fusil.		

The silence of the mountains goes

Preparing its good-bye.

The word they will say

In memoriam will be the explosion.

We lost the name of this century there.

His name and his last name are

Rifle against rifle.

The shell of the southern wind cracked,

And on the first cross

Awakens the truth.

All of the Third World goes
To bury its pain
With a hail of lead, they will make
A hole in his honor, his song.

They will leave the body of life there.
His name and last name are
Rifle against rifle.
They will sing their mourning of man and animal,
And instead of tears, cry
By giving off lead.

They will lift the man up from the tomb to the sun,

And they will spread his name:

Rifle against rifle,

Rifle against rifle,

Rifle against rifle.

"Fusil contra fusil" consists of two sections: a somber verse that speaks of mourning (Ex. 1A, "El silencio del monte va") and a chorus that sounds like a rallying cry, carrying the song title ("Se perdió el nombre de este siglo allí"). In later songs, Rodríguez would expand on this multipartite structure to set sections in different tonalities, particularly the relative major.

Ex. 1A – "Fusil contra fusil," Verse

The assassination of Ernesto "Che" Guevara in the Bolivian jungle inspired two of Rodríguez's earliest successes, "Fusil contra fusil" (1968) and "La era está pariendo un corazón" (1968). These early examples, written before Rodríguez received training in music at ICAIC, already show several characteristics of his compositional devices.

Particularly interesting is Rodríguez's use of modal mixture in this song, which seems closer to E Dorian than E minor. On the one hand, the melody of the verse seems more in keeping with E minor, particular in its first lines, as it contains flatted sixths (C natural); on the other, the accompaniment contains more A major chords (IV) than A minors. Such modal mixtures, particularly with the parallel majors or minors of iv and vi, are a frequently occurring feature in Rodríguez's songs.

Ex. 1B – "Fusil contra fusil," Chorus

This use of A major seems to increase the pull to the relative major G in this song, as the A major is used to lead into the dominant of G, D major at the end of the verse, at "su adiós" and "explosión"; however, this dominant resolves not to the G major that has been set up, but to the E minor for the start of the chorus, in the familiar VII-i pattern of rock music. The second half of the chorus (Ex. 1B), starting at "Se quebró la cáscara del viento al sur," is in G, leading to a sequence of rising thirds (A - C - E) that underscores the words, "despierta la verdad," ending in a Picardy third. This progression of rising thirds, as well as the i-VII-i progressions in the chorus, seems more reminiscent of rock and folk-rock in 1960s Britain or the United States and demonstrates their influence on Rodríguez's music at this time; the Picardy third ending may also reflect the influence of Renaissance music, of which Rodríguez is an admirer.

"La era está pariendo un corazón" ("The Era Is Giving Birth to a Heart," 1968), in *Al final de este viaje*

Verse: I=D (0:10)

D D+

I

Le he preguntado

I asked

D7

V7

A mi sombra

My shadow

G

IV

A ver como ando

To see how I am going

Gm(maj7)

iv

Para reirme,

In order to laugh,

D

I

Mientras el llanto

While the cry

Em

ii

Con voz de templo

With the voice of the temple

A9

V

Rompe en la sala

Breaks into the room

A

V

Regando el tiempo.

Washing down the time.

Verse) Mi sombra dice (0:31)

Que reírse

My shadow says

Es ver los llantos

That to laugh

Como mi llanto,

Is to see the cries

Y me he callado

Like my cry,

Desesperado,

And I fell silent

Y escucho entonces

despairing,

La tierra llora.

And I then listen

To the earth crying.

Chorus: I=D (1:02)

D (PAC)

I

La era está pariendo

The era is giving birth

G

IV

un corazón,

to a heart.

No puede más,

It can't go on any more;

Em

ii

se muere de dolor.

it is dying of pain,

Y hay que acudir corriendo

And one has to get there, running,

F#m

iii

pues se cae el porvenir/.

since the future is collapsing.

G

IV

A

V

En cualquier selva del mundo

In any jungle in the world,

D-Em-F#m-G-A

I-ii-iii-IV-V

en cualquier calle.

in any street.

D (PAC)

Chorus): Debo dejar la casa

I must leave my home

y el sillón.

and armchair.

La madre vive hasta que muere el sol.

The mother lives until the sun dies.

Y hay que quemar el cielo

And one has to burn the heavens

si es preciso por vivir/.

if it is necessary in order to live.

Por cualquier hombre del mundo,

For any man of the world,

por cualquier casa.

for any home.

This second elegy to Che has been interpreted as referring to the gap between the ideologies of the Revolution and reality (Shaw 2002: 165, Gutiérrez 1999: 76-81). Thanks to the singer Omara Portuondo, who performed the song on radio and television, the song became popular toward the end of the 1960s.

As with "Fusil contra fusil," the song has two contrasting sections, a restrained verse ("Le he preguntado a mi sombra") and a more dramatic chorus ("La era está pariendo un corazón"). The verse is full of images of crying, both by the songwriter ("como mi llanto") and the world at large ("la tierra llora"). The music is depictive of this mood; the melody descends chromatically in repeated notes (Ex 2A), reminiscent of expressions of quiet resignation in opera and art songs, while the harmony is static, with a bass pedal for the first three measures. The guitar playing seems depictive as well; in the introduction, its slight ornamental flourish followed by steady, monotone picking in the guitar, provokes an image of weeping. Word painting is ironic at "para reírme" and effective at "como mi llanto," as the chromatic melody passes through B-flat and is harmonized with a G minor, or iv substituted for IV.

Ex. 2A-"La era está pariendo un corazón," Verse

Le he pre - gun - ta - do a mi som - bra a ver como an -
[I asked my shadow to see how I am going
do - pa-ra re - ir - me mien-tras el llan - to -
in order laugh while I cry.]

*Rhythms in melody after Martha Duarte (Rodríguez 2005, vol. 3: 22).

In contrast, the chorus honors Che's dedication to causes everywhere ("debo dejar la casa y sillón," "en cualquier selva del mundo," "por cualquier hombre del mundo"). Musically, the chorus is more dramatic, with the melody in sequential leaps (Ex. 2B). The guitar is also strummed rather than finger-picked, and the harmonies and bass have more movement. Rodríguez emphasizes the words "pues se cae el porvenir" by moving from Em (ii) to F#m (iii) at the end of the phrase, avoiding the more common progression of ii-V, followed by I at the beginning of the next phrase. Hence, this early song shows Rodríguez already having considerable skill in painting words harmonically and constructing contrasting sections.

Ex. 2B-"La era está pariendo un corazón," Chorus

La e - ra es - tá pa-rien - do un cora-zón no pue - demás.
[the era is giving birth to a heart it can't go on any more
se mue-re de do-lor Y hay que a - cu-di - ir co-rien - do pues se
it is dying of pain And it has to get somewhere, running since the future
ca - e el por - ve-ni - i - ir
is collapsing.]

*Rhythms in melody after Martha Duarte (Rodríguez 2005, vol. 3: 24).

"Ese hombre"(1967?),¹⁶ in *Expedición*

Verse: I=G major

D		C
V		IV
Ese hombre que por hechos o por dichos		
D	C	
V	IV	
es respetado tanto,		
D		C
V		IV
Ese hombre que por dichos o por hechos		
D	C	C-G/B-D/A
V	IV	IV-I6-V
es festejado tanto,		
G	D	C G
I	V	IV I
Debiera olvidar que casi iba solo		
G	D	C
I	V	IV
cuando desnudo aquella emoción		
	G	
	I	
que ahora es de todos.		
G	D	C G
I	V	IV I
Debiera olvidar que casi iba solo		
G	D	C
I	V	IV
//: cuando conquistó el cetro que hoy		
	G	
	I	
le ciñen a coro. ://		

Ese hombre que por hechos o por dichos
es escuchado tanto,
Ese hombre que por dichos o por hechos
es contemplado tanto,
Recuerde por qué, por qué es que le quieren.
Recuerde que ha partido de sí
en pos de otros seres.
Recuerde por qué, por qué es que le quieren.
//: Recuerde que da con una razón
algo para deberes.://

Ese hombre que por hechos o por dichos
es amado tanto,
Ese hombre que por dichos o por hechos
es alabado tanto,
Se cuida de sí, se cuida de él solo
por que hay un placer perverso en creer
merecerlo todo.
Se cuida de sí, se cuida de él solo
//: porque el mismo don que lo levantó
puede ahorgalo en lodo. ://

That man who by his deeds or sayings

is respected so much,

That man who by his sayings or deeds

is celebrated so much,

Must have forgotten that he almost went alone

when he revealed that emotion

that now is of everyone.

Must have forgotten that he almost went alone

when he conquered the sceptre that today

they all attach to him.

That man that by deeds or sayings
Is listened to so much,
That man who by sayings or deeds
Is contemplated so much,
Should remember why, why it is that they like him.
Should remember that he started off by himself
in pursuit of other beings.
Should remember why, why it is that they like him,
Should remember that he gives, for a reason,
Something in exchange for duties.

That man who by his deeds or sayings
Is loved so much
That man who by his deeds or sayings
Is praised so much,
Should take care of himself, of himself alone
Because there is a perverse pleasure in believing
That he deserves it all.
Should take care of himself, of himself alone
Because the same don that lifted him
Could bury him in mud.

*Date estimated by Clara Díaz Pérez on the basis of style (interview, 2006). Liner notes on *Expedición* (2002) dates the song as 1977.

In contrast with the Che-inspired songs of admiration and reflection, “Ese hombre” evokes a less flattering image of a powerful figure. According to Shaw, the song expresses the trovador’s disillusionment at the time with the corruption of Cuban leadership (Shaw 2002: 182-183). Indeed, the lyrics refer openly to cronyism and pilferage (“Ese hombre. . .recuerde que da con una razón/ algo para deberes,” “Ese hombre. . .se cuide de sí, se cuide de él solo/ por que hay un placer perverso en creer”); however, the last couplet (“porque el mismo don que lo levantó/ puede ahorgalo en lodo”) suggests that the subject is not an ultimate authority. Shaw mentions that the song has not appeared in published songbooks or biographies. Although bootleg performances have been circulating on cassettes and the Internet for years, the song was not released on a commercial CD until 2002 – perhaps thirty-five years after its creation.¹⁷

The harmonies in this early song are simple and diatonic. Nonetheless, by having the first four measures (assuming a 6/8 meter) serve as an extension of the dominant,¹⁸ rather than starting or resolving quickly to the tonic, the harmonies make an unfinished statement out of the words, “Ese hombre que por hechos o por dichos/ es respetado tanto.” In contrast, Rodríguez sets the narrator’s opinion of “that man” – “se cuide de sí, se cuide de él solo” – in a resolution to the tonic, giving firmer harmonic ground to the narrator’s view of the subject (Ex. 3A). Hence, the extended dominant, to express the publicly accepted view, and the tonic, to express the narrator’s view, sets up two contrasting parts within a strophic structure, giving greater credence, through harmony, to the narrator’s views.

Ex. 3A – “Ese hombre,” transcription

The transcription shows the following lyrics and chords:

Voice: E - se hom - bre que por he - chos o por di - chos.
[That man by deeds or sayings]

Guitar: C IV D V C IV D V

Voice: — es es - cu - cha - do tan - to, E - se
[is listened to so much.]

Guitar: C IV D V C IV D V

Voice: Re - cuer - de por que, por que es que le qui - e - ren,
[Should remember why, why it is that they like him.]

Guitar: G I D V C IV G I

Similarly, the rhythm complements the text. While the accompaniment is in a fast ternary meter, the melody to the beginning of “Ese hombre” is in a 6/8 against the accompaniment in 3/4, rendering rhythmically unstable these words relating to the public’s admiration for the leader. When the text moves on to the songwriter’s opinion, “Recuerde por que, por que es que le quieren” and the tonic harmony, the melody starts to follow the ternary rhythm of the accompaniment more closely; furthermore, the bass note is sustained for two measures rather than one in the previous passage. Hence, the songwriter’s views are more musically grounded than the public’s view, not only harmonically but also rhythmically. Similarly controversial songs such as “Epistolario del subdesarrollo” and “Viven muy felices” helped Rodríguez develop an enthusiastic following but raised suspicions among some authorities (Rodríguez 1996: 10).

16 According to Rodríguez’s *Ojalá Studios*, this song was written in 1977 (p.c.), as is written in the liner notes for *Expedición*. However, Clara Díaz believes the song was written in the 1967-1970 period, due to its style (p.c.), while Shaw cites it as an open statement of Rodríguez’s disillusionment with the regime during the 1967-1970 period (Shaw 2002: 182-183). No further explanation of the song is given in the liner notes.

17 Because Rodríguez started to release commercial recordings ten years into his career, many of Rodríguez’s famous early songs have not appeared on commercial CD (e.g., “Viven muy felices,” “Mientras tanto”). His most recent CD, *Érase que se era* (2006), is completely made up of songs composed between 1967 and 1972. Likewise, as Rodríguez’s output has been extensive, many songs do not appear in songbooks.

18 Early bootleg versions tend to be in G, with the dominant at D; the version in *Expedición* is D, with the dominant at G.

"Debo partirme en dos" ("I Must Split Myself in Two," 1969), in *Al final de este viaje*

Intro: Gm-Ab-D

Verse: i=G minor

Gm	Ab	D
i	bi	V

(0:12)

A) No se crea que es majadería,

Don't think that it is foolishness,

Gm	Ab	D
i	bi	V

Que nadie se levante aunque me ría.

Don't you get up even if I laugh.

Gm	Bb	F
i	III=I	V

Hace rato que vengo lidiando con gente

It's been some time that I have come fighting with people

Gm	Bb	F
vi	I	V

Que dice que yo canto cosas indecentes.

That say I sing indecent things.

Refrain: I=Bb major

(0:36)

Bb	Gm	Eb	F
I	vi	IV	V

Te quiero, mi amor, no me dejes solo.

"I love you, my love, don't leave me alone.

Bb (PAC)	Gm	Eb	F
I	vi	IV	V

No puedo estar sin ti, mira que yo lloro.

I can't be without you, see that I'm crying."

Verse: i=Gm

(0:48)

¿No ven? Ya soy decente, me fue fácil
Que el público se agrupe y que me aclame,
Que se acerquen los niños, los amantes del ritmo,
Que se queden sentados los intelectuales.

Don't you see? I'm already decent, it was easy for me
That the public group together and applaud me,
That children and lovers of rhythm approach me,
That the intellectuals stay seated.

Pre-chorus

F	Eb	D
V/III	IV/III=V/Vi	V

Debo partirme en dos, debo partirme en dos.

(1:11)

I must split myself in two, I must split myself in two.

Chorus: i=Gm-> Bb

(1:17)

D	Gm (PAC)	Eb
V	I	VI

Unos dicen que aquí, otros dicen que allá.

Some say over here, others say over there.

Gm	Eb
i	VI

Sólo quiero decir, sólo quiero cantar,

I only want to say, I only want to sing,

Cm	Bb	F
iv	III	VII

Y no importa la suerte que pueda correr una canción.

And the fate of a song doesn't matter to me.

D	Gm	Eb
V	i	VI

Unos dicen que aquí, otros dicen que allá,

Some say over here, others say over there,

Gm	Eb
i	VI

Sólo quiero decir, sólo quiero cantar,

I only want to say, I only want to sing,

Cm	Bb	F
iv	III	V/III

Y no importa que luego me suspendan la función.

D-Gm
V-i

And I don't care if later they suspend my performance.

Verse) Yo también canté en tonos menores.

I also sang in minor keys.

Yo también padecí de esos dolores.

I also endured those pains.

Yo también parecía cantar como un santo.

I also apparently sang like a saint.

Yo también repetí en millones de cantos:

I also repeated in millions of songs:

Refrain) Te quiero, mi amor...

"I love you, my love..."

Verse) Pero me fui enredando en mas asuntos

But I was involved in other matters,

Y aparecieron cosas de este mundo.

And things of this world appeared.

"Fusil contra fusil," "La Canción de la trova"

"Fusil contra fusil," "La canción de la Trova"

Y "La era pariendo" se puso de moda.

And "La era pariendo" came into fashion.

Debo partirme en dos, debo partirme en dos.

I must split myself in two, I must split myself in two.

Chorus) Unos dicen que aquí...

Some say over here,

Verse) Yo quería cantar en apuchado

I wanted to sing hooded,

Y después confundirme a vuestro lado,

And then be confused next to you,

Aunque así no tuviera amigos y citas,

Even though that way I wouldn't have any friends or dates,

Ni algún que otro favor de una chica bonita.

Nor any other favor of a pretty girl.

Refrain) Te quiero, mi amor...

"I love you, my love..."

Verse) No voy a repetir ese estribillo.

I am not going to repeat this refrain.

Algunos ojos miran con mal brillo.

Other eyes look out with an evil shine.

Y estoy temiendo ahora no ser interpretado:

And I am now afraid of being misunderstood:

Casi siempre sucede que se piensa algo malo.

They almost always think something bad.

Debo partirme en dos.

I must split myself in two.

Debo partirme en dos.

I must split myself in two.

Chorus) Unos dicen que aquí...

Some say over here,

"Debo partirme en dos," composed during Rodríguez's journey on Playa Girón, is widely thought to refer to his conflicts with authorities and censorship, described earlier (Moore 2003: 37; Shaw 2002: 115; Gutiérrez 1999: 64). Rather than limiting his popularity, such censure enhanced his appeal among youth and intellectuals. According to Díaz Pérez:

Que muchas de sus grabaciones fueran borradas de los archivos de la radio y la televisión; que su imagen no apareciera ya semanalmente en la pequeña pantalla para el consumo de miles de espectadores, implicaría dentro del grupo de seguidores – jóvenes estudiantes e intelectuales –, no un estado de mutismo o de incomunicación con el artista sino, todo lo contrario, un incentivo de búsqueda y encuentro de mayor hondura con su obra y su actitud ético artística (Díaz Pérez 1996: 237).¹⁹

Rodríguez developed a rapport with this following, for whom he says the song was written. He injected a bit of the-
atricality into the performance:

Esa canción es de un sentido de burlarme de todo. En esa época yo hacía muchos conciertos en teatros pequeños. Y había un público que me iba ver, con quien yo mantenía una especie de complicidad de diálogo. Era un público que estaba tanto en mí, bronco en mis líos y todo eso. Y yo cantaba por esa gente que seguía lanzada de mí, conflicto con la burocracia y todo eso. Esas canciones todas fueron dirigidas a esa público y algunos fueron muy teatrales. Yo cantaba muy lento, muy diciendo el texto-- "Que nadie se levante aunque me ría" (pausa)--y miraba la gente. Yo pegaba a veces la gente levantanda, y se empezaba a reír. Había gente que se ponía incómodo. Era para cantar al público para provocar a la gente (Rodríguez 2006, interview).²⁰

Rodríguez's sense of humor notwithstanding, it is hard to ignore the acrid tone of the verses and chorus of this song. Beginning quietly in G minor, the verse immediately shifts to BII, and the tritone formed by the bass line between this chord and the ensuing V gives the words ("se levante, aunque me ría," "me fue fácil/que el público se agrupe y que me aclame") an unsettled quality (Ex. 4A). As Rodríguez pictures himself fighting with people ("Hace rato que vengo lidiando con gente/ Que dice que yo canto cosas indecentes"), being misunderstood ("Y estoy temiendo ahora no ser interpretado:/ Casi siempre sucede que se piensa algo malo"), or being popular with the public ("Fusil contra fusil," "La canción de la Trova,"/y "La era pariendo" se puso de moda"), the harmony temporarily modulates to Bb major, moving the tessitura and dynamics up with it.

Ex. 4A—"Debo partirme en dos," Verse



This modulation sets up the refrain (Ex. 4B, "Te quiero, mi amor"), a sarcastic stab at those sectors of the Cuban public who preferred to hear simple love songs. This refrain is a parody of a commercial love song, mimicking the facile poetry and harmonies of such songs. As Rodríguez recounts:

Aquella vez que me dieron consejo para que llegara a ser estrella, se me pedía que no hiciera canciones an-
raras, es decir, que escogiera el camino de lo fácil. Y lo fácil es tentador. Se es cómodo para componer como
se puede ser cómodo para escuchar lo que se compone (Casas 1984: 24).²¹

Rodríguez sets this refrain in the relative major, Bb, in the stereotypical I-vi-IV-V progression. The melody is so simple that it isn't even an independent melody--it is a mere doubling of the bass line.²²

20 "This song has a sense of ridiculing everything. During those times, I was performing in many small theaters. And there was a following that was coming to see me, with whom I maintained a certain dialogue of complicity. They were so much into me, wild in my troubles and all. And I sang for those people who continued to throw themselves at me, conflicts with the bureaucracy and all. All those songs were directed at this following, and some songs were very theatrical. I would sing very slowly, really pronouncing the text-- "That no one gets up although they laugh at me" (pause)—and I'd look at the people. Sometimes I would stare at people who happened to be getting up, and they would start to laugh. Some people would get uncomfortable. The song was for singing to this following, to provoke people."

21 "At that time, I was advised that to become a star, I was asked not to write such strange songs--in other words, to choose the easy way. And the easy way is tempting. It's as comfortable to compose for as it is comfortable to listen to what one has composed."

22 I thank Richard Porterfield for this observation.

Ex. 4B-“Debo partirme en dos,” Refrain

Te quie-ro mi-a-mor no me de-jes so-lo
[I love you, my love, don't leave me alone]

After repeating the verse (back in G minor), the chorus begins, set off by a rock-oriented, power-chord like strumming style (Ex. 4C). Rodríguez pictures the audience as being separated into two camps, the intellectuals and those who want simple songs (“Unos dicen que aquí, otros dicen que allá”). He finishes the chorus in a challenge over the cancellation of his performances (“Y no importa que luego me suspendan la función”). Like the verse, this last line ends on F, the dominant to Bb major, with the voice on high F; unlike the verse, however, the F does not resolve to Bb, instead returning to G minor. Hence that dominant is never resolved, like the challenge implied by the underlying words.

Ex. 4C-“Debo partirme en dos,” Chorus

U - nos di - cen que a- qui, o-tros di - cen que a- llá y só-lo quie-ro de- cir só-lo quie-ro can- tar
[Some say over here... others say over there, I only want to say I only want to sing.]

y no im - por - ta que lue - go me sus - pen - dan la fun - cio - o - o - o - ón
and I don't care if later they suspend my performance.]

This song demonstrates several advancements in harmonic sophistication over the earlier examples. First, Rodríguez has set one section, the refrain or estribillo, in a different tonality, the relative major, to match the contrasting lyrics and tone. He has added chromatic chords, such as bII, to his harmonic vocabulary. In addition, the attempted but failed modulation to Bb at the dramatic end to the chorus provides a feeling of uncertainty.

"Resumen de noticias" ("Summary of News," 1970), in *Al final de este viaje*

Intro: C-G-Am-Em/G-F-Em-Dm7-G4

Verse: I=C major

C (IAC)	G	Am	Em/G
I	V	vi	iii
He estado al alcance de todos los bolsillos			
F	Em	Dm7	G
IV	iii	ii	V
Porque no cuesta nada mirarse para adentro.			
C (IAC)	G	Am	Em/G
I	V	vi	iii
He estado al alcance de todas las manos			
F	Em	Dm7	G
IV	iii	ii	V4-3
Que han querido tocar mi mano amigamente			

C (IAC)

Verse) Pero pobre de mí! No he estado con los presos
De su propia cabeza acomodada,
Ni he estado en los que ríen con sólo media risa,
Los delimitadores de las primaveras.

(Intro)

(1:06)

Verse) No he estado en los archivos ni en las papelerías,
Y se me archiva en copias y no en originales.
No he estado en los mercados grandes de la palabra,
Pero he dicho lo mío, a tiempo y sonriente.

No he estado enumerando las manchas en el sol,
Pues sé que en una sola mancha cabe el mundo.
He procurado ser un gran mortificado
Para si mortifico no vayan a acusarme.

(G-A7) – modulates a step up; same progressions

D A Bm F#m/A

Verse) Aunque se dice que me sobran enemigos,

G F#m Em A4/7 G

Todo el mundo me escucha, bien quedo cuando canto.
Yo he preferido hablar de cosas imposibles
Porque de lo posible se sabe demasiado.

He preferido el polvo, así, sencillamente,
Pues la palabra amor aún me suena hueco
He preferido un golpe ase, de vez en cuando,
Porque la inmunidad me carcome los huesos.

Agradezco la participación de todos,
Los que colaboraron con esta melodía.
Se debe subrayar la importante tarea
De los perseguidores de cualquier nacimiento.

Si alguien que me escucha se viera retratado,
Séase que se hace con ese destino.
Cualquier reclamación, que sea sin membrete.
Buenas noches, amigos y enemigos.

A-Bm-F#m-G-F#m-G-F#m-Em-A4/7-A7-D

I have reached the end of my pocket change,

Because it's not at all hard to look within oneself.

I have been at the reach of all the hands

That have wanted to touch my hand like a friend.

But poor me, I haven't been with prisoners
Of their own accomodated heads,
And I haven't been with those who laugh with only half a laugh,
Those who limit the spring.

I haven't been in archives nor in stationers,
And they archive me in copies, not in originals.
I haven't been in the grand markets of words,
But I have said my words, quickly and smiling.

I have not been enumerating the blots in the sun,
Since I know that a single blot would reach the entire world.
I have managed to be greatly tormented,
So that if I torment others, they will not accuse me.

Although they say that I have too many enemies,

Everyone listens to me, I make a good impression when I sing.
I have preferred to talk of impossible things
Because one already knows too much about the possible.

I have preferred dust, like this, simply,
Because the word "love" still sounds empty to me.
I have preferred blows, from time to time,
Because immunity eats away at my bones.

I thank the participation of everyone,
Those who collaborate with this melody.
One must highlight the important role
Of the persecuters of whatever origin

If someone listening to me sees himself portrayed,
Know that it was done with that purpose.
Any complaints can be done without letterhead.
Good evening, friends and enemies.

Trans

10

In this song, written later during the trip on the Océano Pacífico, Rodríguez addresses similar issues as in “Debo partirme en dos.” He defines his principles of songwriting, including reflection, sincerity, and critique, to both the friends and the enemies of nueva trova at the time. He defends his songs (“Yo he preferido hablar de cosas imposibles/porque de lo posible se sabe demasiado”), asserts his popularity (“Todo el mundo me escucha, bien quedo cuando canto”), makes pointed remarks at unnamed persons (“Si alguien que me escucha se viera retratado/sépa-se que se hace con ese destino/cualquier reclamación, que sea sin membrete”), hints at censure (“se me archiva en copias y no en originales”), and derides his enemies (“no he estado con los presos/de su propia cabeza acomodada”).

Despite a similar spirit, “Resumen de noticias” is simple harmonically compared with “Debo partirme en dos.” The same diatonic eight-chord pattern is repeated every four measures corresponding to couplets of text. There is never any doubt as to the tonality of the song, with imperfect authentic cadences occurring with unbroken periodicity. This harmonic certainty and frequent repetition is appropriate to the text: unlike “Debo partirme en dos,” there is no ironic, contrasting section, with each couplet instead expressing the same sentiment. The relentless repetition creates an anthem-like effect, which invites the audience to listen more closely to the lyrics – a formula to which Rodríguez has often returned, as explained in the ensuing summary.

Summary: early political songs

Rodríguez's early political songs show several aspects of his self-taught style. Several songs are set in a multipartite structure, with each section representing different points of view, often featuring differing keys, motives, or rhythms. For example, in "Debo partirme en dos," the songwriter's point of view is set in G minor, while the parodic refrain reflecting the public's expectations is set in Bb major. In "Ese hombre," he contrasts a phrase in the dominant against one in the tonic, and a phrase with two juxtaposed rhythms against one with a steady bass, to lend musical differentiation to two points of view. Such contrast is a hallmark of songs by *vieja trova* artists such as Sindo Garay and María Teresa Vera, who often set sections of bipartite songs in different keys, and Rodríguez had admired similar contrasts between sections in the Beatles (Rodríguez 2006, interview).²³ This technique was already a conscious part of Rodríguez's style:

Las canciones mías no son equilibradas. Son conscientemente desequilibradas. Hay tiempos que yo empiezo en una forma y termina en otra. Como un recitativo y termino con algo rítmico. Muy intencionalmente para establecer dos maneras, dos estadios (Rodríguez 2006, interview).²⁴

Harmonically, the songwriter often uses modal mixture, sometimes in momentary word-painting (as with iv in "para reírme" in "La era está pariendo un corazón" or the Neapolitan in "Debo partirme en dos") and sometimes for a Picardy third ending ("Fusil contra fusil"). Such mixture, particularly the use of iv for IV, also occurs in songs by the Beatles ("Nowhere Man") and by Garay ("Perla Marina," "A Mantanza"), as well as the Italian opera that is said to have influenced such *vieja trovadores* (e.g., "Di quell'amor," *La Traviata*). Rodríguez also avoids stereotypical progressions, as shown in the insertion of iii rather than V at "porvenir" in "La era está pariendo un corazón." These features have continued to be hallmarks of his style in later decades.

On the other hand, as illustrated in "Resumen de noticias," Rodríguez had already found usefulness in simple and repetitive harmonies. As he explains, he purposefully keeps the music more simple in songs with a message:

Generalmente estas canciones con mensajes son musicalmente más simples, menos trabajada, por motivos de mensajes. Hay menos búsqueda de cosas musicales. "Resumen de noticias" puede ser una de estas canciones. No me interesaba cantar musicalmente sino encontrar un esquema armónico, donde podía meter una cantidad de versos. En esos casos tengo más interés en las palabras que la música. Estos son los casos donde hay un predominio del texto en la canción (Rodríguez 2006, interview).²⁵

Rodríguez employed similar repeating patterns in songs such as "Testamento" (1975), which he wrote to sing to Cuban soldiers in the Angolan War; "Días y flores" (1975); "Canción urgente para Nicaragua" (1980), and "Cita con angeles" (2003).

Stylistically, many of these songs owe a debt to 1960s Anglo-American rock. Songs such as "Fusil contra fusil" and "Y nada más" (1965) use the VII-I progressions and common-tone third progressions common in rock of this period. The choruses of songs such as "Debo partirme en dos" have the stereotypical features of a rock chorus, such as a higher tessitura than the verse and fully voiced, strummed chords, the acoustic equivalent of the power chord. There are also several references to folk-rock of the 1960s: the simple strumming style of the guitar in "Playa Girón" (1969) or unedited versions of "Ese hombre" are reminiscent of early Bob Dylan, while the picking style, descending-fourth harmonies, and descending bass lines in "Y nada más" (1965) and "¿Qué hago ahora?" (1969) recall the Byrds. As described in the following section, Rodríguez's songs about love or personal situations from the same period share these stylistic and harmonic characteristics; however, these harmonies are often more complex, with more frequent modulations and chromatic or modal substitutions.

23 Examples include "La tarde" by Garay and "Porque me siento triste" by Vera, both of whose second sections are in the parallel major of the first. Others, such as "Perla marina" by Garay, contain modulations in the second half (Garay 1940, *Trio Veinte Años* 1999). Rodríguez admires the turn to the minor mode in the bridge of the Beatles' "We Can Work It Out" (Rodríguez 2006, interview).

24 "My songs are not balanced. They're consciously not. There are times when I start in one form and end with another. For example, a recitative that ends with something rhythmic. Very intentionally in order to establish two manners, two states."

25 "Generally these songs with messages are musically simpler, less worked on, for the sake of the messages. There's less of a search for musical things. 'Resumen de noticias' could be one of these songs. I wasn't as interested in singing musically as to find a harmonic schema onto which I could set a quantity of verses. In those cases I have more interest in the words than the music. They are cases where text dominates the song."

Songs of love and personal inspiration to 1970

"Ojalá" ("I Hope," 1969), in *Al final de este viaje, En vivo en Argentina*

Verse: i=D minor->D major->Dm

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

i

Ojalá que las hojas

I hope that the leaves

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

i

no te toquen el cuerpo cuando caigan,

don't touch your body as they fall,

C

VII

Para que no las puedas

So that you can't

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

i

convertir en cristal.

convert them into crystal.

Em

A

ii/i

V

Ojalá que la lluvia

I hope that the rain

D

deje de ser milagro

stops being a miracle

D(bass: C#- B- A)

I

que baja por tu cuerpo.

that runs down your body.

A

G

F#

Bm (IAC)

Bm/A E

V

IV

V/vi

vi

II#

Ojalá que la luna pueda salir sin ti.

I hope that the moon can come out without you.

Dm Dm/C

Bb

A7

Dm (PAC)

i

VI

V7

i

Ojalá que la tierra no te bese los pasos.

I hope that the earth doesn't kiss your path.

A

Pre-chorus: Dm -> C major

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

C

i

VII= I

Ojalá se te acabe la mirada constante

I hope that you are finished with the constant glance,

C

Fm

I

iv

la palabra precisa, la sonrisa perfecta

the precise word, the perfect smile.

G

C (PAC)

V

I

Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto.

I hope that something will happen which will erase you quickly.

A

Chorus: I=C major (=VII/i)

C E/B

Am

I

V64/vi

vi

Una luz cegadora,

A blinding light,

C/G

F

I64

IV

un disparo de nieve,

a shot of snow,

F

G

IV

V

Ojalá por lo menos

I hope that at least

C (IAC)

C (IAC)

I

que me lleve la muerte,

they bring me death,

C E/B

Am

I

V64/vi

vi

Para no verte tanto,

So that I won't see you so much,

C/G

F

I64

IV

para no verte siempre,

so that I won't see you always,

Dm

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

ii

En todos los segundos,

In every second,

C

C

I

en todas las visiones.

in every vision.

Fm

G

Dm (sop. Guitar: d-c#-c-b)

iv

V/C=IV/Dm

i

Ojalá que no pueda tocarte ni en canciones

I hope that I can't even touch (play) you in songs.

Verse: i=Dm->D major->Dm

Ojalá que la aurora no de gritos que caigan en mi espalda.	I hope that the dawn has no screams that fall on my shoulders.
Ojalá que tu nombre se le olvide a esta voz.	I hope that this voice forgets your name.
Ojalá las paredes no retengan tu ruido de camino cansado.	I hope that the walls do not retain the sound of your weary road.
Ojalá que el deseo se vaya tras de ti a tu viejo gobierno de difuntos y flores.	I hope that desire goes away behind you to your old government of the deceased and flowers.
Ojalá se te acabe la mirada constante, la palabra precisa, la sonrisa perfecta.	I hope that you are finished with the constant glance, the precise word, the perfect smile.
Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto.	I hope that something will happen which will erase you quickly.

Chorus: I=C (=VII/i)

Una luz cegadora, un disparo de nieve, Ojalá por lo menos que me lleve la muerte, Para no verte tanto, para no verte siempre, En todos los segundos, en todas las visiones.	A blinding light, a shot of snow I hope that at least they bring me death, So that I won't see you so much, so that I won't see you always, In every second, in every vision.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Ojalá que no pueda tocarte ni en canciones. I hope that I can't even touch you in songs.

B) Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto... I hope that something will happen which will erase you quickly.

Fm	G	C (PAC)
iv	V	I

C) Ojalá que no pueda, tocarte ni en canciones. I hope that I can't even touch (play) you in songs.

Rodríguez has stated consistently in interviews and testimonials that this song, written onboard the *Océano Pacífico* in 1969, was for Emilia Sánchez, whom he had met when they were both eighteen. A medical student in Havana whose true passion was literature, she introduced Rodríguez to such poets as César Vallejo and Lord Byron. After a year in Havana, she returned to study literature at her home town of Camagüey, where she later became a professor. As Rodríguez recounted to the Chilean *nueva canción* singer Isabel Parra, the song relates his continued obsession with Emilia: "Se me quedó un poco ese fantasma detrás. Por eso es que compuse esta canción, quizás en un momento de delirio, de arrebató, de sentimiento un poco desmesurado, 'ojalá esto, ojalá lo otro'" (Díaz Pérez 1995: 115).²⁶ As Sanz notes, the song illustrates the songwriter's conflict between his desire to free himself from her image, which he sees everywhere, and his simultaneous pull toward yielding to his obsession rather than forgetting her (Sanz 1984: 142-143).

The song has two contrasting sections, with a verse in D,²⁷ where he relates his omnipresent vision of Emilia in the leaves, the rain, the moon, and the earth (e.g., "Ojalá que la luna pueda salir sin ti"), and a chorus in C major, where he declares his wish to be freed of her memory ("para no verte tanto, /para no verte siempre"). These two sections are connected by the modulatory pre-chorus from D minor to C major.

While the verse is easily heard in D from the beginning, its mode remains somewhat ambiguous until the end, as it shifts constantly. At the beginning, the repeating chromatic descent in the high note on the guitar ends on B natural, which is not part of the natural D minor scale and hence hints at D Dorian. In the third line (Ex. 6A), however, the harmony modulates to the parallel D major, as if to recall a happy memory in "ojalá que la lluvia/deje de ser milagro/que baja por tu cuerpo." This modulation starts with the E minor (ii) at the beginning of this line, which would exist in D Dorian but not D minor. A move to B minor at "ojalá que la luna pueda salir sin ti" brings a melancholy air to the words "sin ti" but is also still in the harmonic plane of D major (vi). It is only in the final line of the verse, where the harmony abruptly goes back to D minor and the passing harmony of Bb favors the D minor tonality over D Dorian, that the perfect authentic cadence finally confirms the mode as D minor. This modal ambiguity would seem an appropriate setting for a text that relates to a memory involving complex and conflicting emotions.

²⁶ "This phantom was still with me. For this reason, I composed this song, perhaps in a moment of delirium, a fit, a slightly excessive feeling, 'I hope this, I hope that.'"

²⁷ The recording on *Al final de este viaje* (1978) is in C minor; the recording on *Silvio Rodríguez – Pablo Milanes: En vivo en Argentina* (1984) is in D minor. As Rodríguez told me that he had recorded all the songs on the former album a half- to whole-step lower than usual, I have left the transcription in D minor, as per the live recording.

Ex. 6A—"Ojalá," Verse *Rhythms in melody as per Martha Duarte (Rodríguez 2005, vol. 3: 232-234)

O - ja - lá que la llu - via de - je de ser mi - la - gro que ba - ja per tu cuer - po
[I hope that the rain stops being a miracle that runs down your body.]

O - ja - lá que la lu - na pue - da sa - lir sin ti.
[I hope that the moon can come out without you.]

O - ja - lá que la tie - rra no te be - se los pa - sos.
[I hope that the earth doesn't kiss your path.]

The pre-chorus also mixes modes momentarily, substituting F minor (iv) for IV at "la sonrisa perfecta," lending these words, to this author, a bittersweet color. This chord leads to the strongest cadence in the song, a perfect authentic cadence in C major at the words "Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto" (Ex. 6B). The ensuing chorus is unambiguously in C major, with an imperfect authentic cadence in C major ("que me lleve la muerte") confirming the tonality, as if to lend harmonic credence to the songwriter's wish to forget Emilia ("Para no verte tanto, para no verte siempre"). Despite this confirmation, the ambiguous mood (and mode) returns as the last chord of the chorus (G=V/C) resolves not to C but loops back to D minor.

Ex. 6B—"Ojalá," Pre-chorus and Chorus *Rhythms in melody as per Martha Duarte (Rodríguez 2005, vol. 3: 234-235)

O - ja - lá pa - se al - go que te bo - rre de pron - to. U - na luz ce - ga - do -
[I hope that something will happen that will erase you quickly. A blinding light.]

- ra, un dis - pa - ro de nie - ve, O - ja - lá por lo me - nos que me lle - ve la muer - te,
[a shot of snow. I hope that at least they bring me death.]

Hence, the harmonies in "Ojalá" illustrate Rodríguez's ambivalent feelings about the subject. On the one hand, he wants to believe his resolve to let go of the relationship, as illustrated by the resolute and hopeful C major progressions in the chorus. On the other hand, he is tormented by memories and conflicting feelings, as illustrated by all the modal mixture between D minor and D major in the verse. Such harmonies suggest to this author that Rodríguez is protesting too loudly, perfect authentic cadences and all, at "Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto"; he can't quite bring himself to erase her from his memory.

Several commentators outside of Cuba have claimed that the song is not about Emilia Sánchez but a challenge to the political leadership. Moore has suggested that the song may be directed at an officer involved in Rodríguez's military service or perhaps Castro himself (Moore 2003: 37). When Gloria Simonetti sang the song in the Viña del Mar Festival, the Chilean audience interpreted it as a rejection of tyranny, even though she sang it as a *canCIÓN romántica*, changing the words "tu viejo gobierno" to "invierno" (Faulin 1995: 169). The Cuban dissident Armando Valladares has claimed in Spanish newspapers that the song is about Castro (Faulin 1995: 152); an

annoyed Rodríguez denies this claim in a filmed interview, saying that Valladares had changed the text to suit his argument, while Rodríguez himself has never changed it (Figueredo 1997). The words leave some room for such an interpretation, as some words could describe (sarcastically) an omnipresent ruler as well as an all-encompassing lover ("Ojalá que la tierra no te bese los pasos," "Ojalá se te acabe la mirada constante").

Nonetheless, I believe that the harmonies of "Ojalá" support the argument that the songwriter originally intended it as a love song, as their constant flux seems reflective of those emotions; a wish to erase the memory of a political leader would not need to be painted in nearly so harmonically complex a fashion. As illustrated in the previous section, Rodríguez's political songs, while containing their own harmonic surprises, are simpler harmonically than "Ojalá," with some of them repeating the same harmonies. Had Rodríguez meant "Ojalá" as a political song, he could have employed the same strategy as in "Resumen de noticias" or "Ese hombre," given the frequent repetition in the text.

Trans

10

"Te doy una canción" ("I Give You a Song," 1970), in *Mujeres, En vivo en Argentina*

Intro: F-Bbm-F-Bbm

Verse) I=F major (0:07)

F	Bbm	F
I	iv	I
Como gasto papeles recordándote,		
Am	Bb	
iii	IV	
Como me haces hablar en el silencio,		
G7	F	
II#	I	
Como no te me quitas de las ganas,		
C	Dm	
V	vi	
Aunque nadie me vea, nunca contigo,		
C7	F	
V	I	
y como pasa el tiempo		
C7	F	
V	I	
que de pronto son años		
Dm	G7	C C7
vi	II#7	V-7
sin pasar tu por mí, detenida.		

Chorus: I=F major 0:42

F (IAC)	Dm
I	vi
Te doy una canción si abro una puerta,	
Em7/A	A
V742/vi	V53/vi
y de las sombras sales tú.	
Dm (IAC)	Bb
vi	IV
Te doy una canción de madrugada	
G7	C
II#7	V
cuando más quiero tu luz.	
F (IAC)	Dm
I	vi
Te doy una canción cuando apareces,	
Em7/A	A
V742/vi	V/vi
el misterio del amor,	
Dm (IAC)	Bb
vi	IV
Y si no lo apareces, no me importa,	
G7	C F-Bbm-F
II#7	V I-iv-I
yo te doy una canción.	

Verse) Si miro un poco afuera, me detengo.
La ciudad se derrumba y yo cantando,
La gente que me odia y que me quiere
No me va a perdonar que me distraiga.
Creen que lo digo todo,
Que me juego la vida,
Porque no te conocen, ni te sienten.

Chorus) Te doy una canción y hago un discurso
sobre mi derecho a hablar.
Te doy una canción con mis dos manos,
con las mismas de matar.
Te doy una canción y digo patria,
y sigo hablando para ti.

Dm	Bb
vi	IV
Te doy una canción como un disparo,	
G	F
II#	I
como un libro, una palabra, una guerrilla	
F (PAC)	Dm
I	
como doy el amor.	
Dm/C-Bb-C-Bbm-F	

How I use up so much paper remembering you,

How you make me speak in silence,

How you never leave from my desires,

Even though no one ever sees me with you,

and how the time passes,

which soon become years,

without your coming by for me, lingering.

I'll give you a song if I open a door,

and you come out of the shadows.

I'll give you a song at daybreak

when I most want your brightness.

I'll give you a song when you appear,

the mystery of love,

And if you don't appear, it doesn't matter,

I'll still give you a song.

If I look a bit outside, I stop.
The city is collapsing, and I am singing.
Neither the people who hate me nor who love me
Will pardon me for being distracted.
They think I have said everything,
That I am risking my life,
Because they neither know you nor feel you.

I'll give you a song and a speech
about my right to talk.
I'll give you a song with my two hands,
the same ones with which to kill.
I'll give you a song and salute the homeland,
and continue talking about you.

I'll give you a song like a gunshot,

like a book, a word, a guerrilla,

as I give love.

This song, also written for Emilia Sánchez, contains some tension from modal mixture that nicely complements the text, as observed with “Ojalá.” First, iv (Bb minor, in F major) is substituted for IV (Bb major), coloring “papeles recordandote” in both major and minor harmonies. In the ensuing “Como no te me quitas de las ganas,” G major (II#) is substituted for G minor (ii), coloring this positive thought with a major chord. The negative thought in the next line, “Aunque nadie me vea, nunca contigo,” is ended with a deceptive cadence to vi (D minor), foreshadowing harmonic moves in the chorus.

The chorus is a tug-of-war between F major and its relative minor D; no sooner has one key been confirmed by an authentic cadence when the harmony starts to modulate to the other (Ex. 7A). The F major cadence at the beginning of the chorus is followed in the next measure by D minor; this chord marks the beginning of a modulatory sequence to D minor, culminating in the dominant of D minor at “y de las sombras sales tú”. The imperfect authentic cadence in D minor (“Te doy una canción de madrugada”) is immediately followed by a sequence leading back to F major (V/V to V at “cuando más quiero tu luz”). Mirroring these harmonies is the melody, which follows an antecedent-consequent pattern in F major and D minor, with the same initial leaps and ensuing scalar descents transposed between antecedent and consequent (Ex. 7B). The text also mirrors this major-minor dichotomy: The shadows (sombras) of the first couplet give way to the dawn (madrugada) and light (luz) of the second, as the harmony moves from minor to major. Hence the text and the fluctuating harmonies complement each other in illustrating the two sides of love – its joys and sorrows.

Ex. 7A-“Te doy una canción,” Chorus *Rhythms of melody after Martha Duarte (Rodríguez 2005, vol. 4: 206)

Te doy u - na can - ción si a - bro u - na puer - ta y
[I'll give you a song if I open a door, and
de las som - bras sa - les tu Te doy u - na can
you come out of the shadows I'll give you a song
ción de ma - dru - ga - da cuan -
at daybreak
do mas quie - ro tu luz
when I most want your brightness.]

Harmonic analysis: F, Dm vi, Em7/A V742/vi, A V/vi, Dm vi, Bb IV, G7 II7, C V.

Ex. 7B-“Te doy una canción,” Chorus, Schenker graph

Antecedent Consequent

5th N N 5th N N 5th HC
5th 3rd 3rd 5th 3rd 3rd
4-3 8-7 4-3 3rd 8-7 3
V7 I vi V7/vi vi IV V7/V V7/V V V

Similarly, the text is well-complemented with the music in the last iteration of the chorus, which breaks from the above-described pattern (Ex. 7C). The last couplet reiterates the notes G-F-E-D in the melody as the text insists, "como un disparo, como un libro, una palabra, una guerrilla." In addition, the melody of the chorus is recalled in the last line "como doy el amor," where the run up in its melody from C to Bb recalls the beginning of the chorus. Just as the listener thinks the song has ended resolutely on major, the instrumental tag ends with a iv-I; not all the clouds can be dispelled.

Ex. 7C-"Te doy una canción," Ending

co-mo un dis - pa - ro co - mo un li - bro - un - a pa - la - bra u - na gue -
[like a gunshot, like a book, a word, a guerrilla,

ri - lla co-mo doy el a - mor
as I give love.)

"Aunque no esté de moda" ("Although It's Out of Fashion," 1969) in *Al final de este viaje*

Intro: F#m6-F#md-F#m4/9-F#4/7-F#m6-Bm7-C#7

Verse: i=F# minor-->A major (0:11)

F#m (IAC)	Bm7
i	iv
Hoy, de mi hacia ti, hoy, de ti hacia mi,	
G#d7	C# D C#m-Bm
iiio	V VI v iv
quiero hacerte un regalo viejo. (0:20)	
Bm	D#o
iv/F#m=ii/A	viiio/V
Desempolvemos algo las pasiones lejanas,	
A A/G#	F#m(F#m/E)
I	vi
algo de aquellos sueños sin ventanas.	
D	D#o
IV	viiio/V
Vivamos de corrido sin hacer poesía,	
A A/G#	F#m F#m/E
I	vi
aprendamos palabras de la vida.	

Lift: I=A-->F# (V/Bm) (0:43)

D	D#o	A
IV	viiio/V	I
Desnudémonos pues como viejos amantes		
E	C#	F#
V	V/VI	VI#
que lo mismo de siempre nos quede adelante.		
D	D#o	A
IV	viiio/V	I
Desnudémonos pues como viejos amantes		
E	C#	F#
V	V/VI	VI# (=V/ii)
que se apague la luz y que el sol se levante.		

Today, from me to you; today, from you to me,

I want to give you an old gift.

Let's dust off something of our distant passions,

something of those dreams without windows.

Let's live non-stop, without making poetry.

Let's learn the words of life.

Let's undress then, like old lovers

for whom the same always rests ahead.

Let's undress then, like old lovers

who turn out the light and are awakened by the sun.

Pre-chorus: I=A-->F# (1:05)**Bm (IAC)** **D E** **C#m**

ii IV V iii

Te quiero salvar de tu desnudez

A **G#m** **F#**

I vii V/ii

en pleno centro de la soledad.

Bm **D E** **C#m** **A**

ii IV V iii I

Me quiero salvar haciendo revolución

A **G#m** **C#**

I vii III#

desde tu cuerpo de cristal.

Chorus: I=A (1:27)**A** **E**

I V

Algo nos está pasando.

F#m **C#** **D** **D#o**

vi V/vi=III# IV viio/V

Ayer leí una mano y cada dibujo

E **E#o** **F#** **E**

V viio/VI VI# V

al verme me interrogó.

A **E**

I V

Algo nos está pasando.

F#m **C#** **D** **D#o** **E**

vi V/vi=III# IV viio/V V

Ayer apreté el interruptor de encender la luz

E#o **F#** **E D-C#m-Bm-C#**

viio/VI VI# V

y encendí el sol.

F#m (IAC) (1:51)**Verse)** Hoy, de ti hacia mi, hoy, de mi hacia ti

Vamos a hablar en voz muy baja

Dime lo que te pasa, déjame levantarte,

déjame darte un beso y curarte.

Vivamos de corrido sin hacer poesía

aunque no esté de moda en estos días.

Lift) Aunque no esté de moda, te pido una mano.

Mis entrañas no entienden de estética y cambios.

Aunque no esté de moda repite conmigo,

quiero amor, quiero amor,

quiero amor compartido.

Pre-chorus) Te quiero salvar de tu desnudez

en pleno centro de la soledad.

Me quiero salvar haciendo revolución

desde tu cuerpo por variar.

Chorus) Algo nos está pasando.

Un ruido como de pasos viene

en la oscuridad y se vuelve a ir.

Algo nos está pasando

desde que la gente está empeñada

en quererse amar y en poder vivir.

F#-E-D-D#o-E-E#o-F#

I want to save you from your nakedness

right in the center of loneliness.

I want to save myself, making a revolution

out of your crystal body.

Something is happening to us.

Yesterday I read a hand, and each pattern,

upon looking at me, interrogated me.

Something is happening to us.

Yesterday, I pushed a switch to turn on the light,

and I turned on the sun.

Today, from me to you; today, from you to me,

Let's talk in a very low voice.

Tell me what's happening with you, let me pull you up,

Let me give you a kiss and cure you.

Let's live non-stop, without making poetry.

Although it's not in fashion these days.

Although it's not in fashion, I ask you for your hand.

My guts don't understand aesthetics or changes.

Although it's not in style, repeat with me,

I want love, I want love,

I want love that is shared.

I want to save you from your nakedness

right in the center of loneliness.

I want to save myself, making a revolution

out of your body to change it.

Something is happening to us.

A noise like steps coming

and leaving in the dark.

Something is happening to us

ever since people have been determined

to want to love and to be able to live.

As with "Ojalá" and "Te doy una canción," rapidly shifting harmonies are a constant feature in this song, where the singer seeks a closer relationship from his lover. The song consists of four sections:²⁸ a restrained verse in F# minor (Verse, "Voy de mi hacia ti"), where the singer quietly starts to woo; this wooing becomes more excited in the ensuing lift and pre-chorus sections, which are predominantly in A major, but with many couplets ending in F# major. The chorus, which starts more clearly in A major, features text that would seem to describe paranoia more than the erotic love of the lift and pre-chorus ("Ayer leí una mano y cada dibujo al verme me interrogó," "Un ruido como de pasos viene en la oscuridad y se vuelve a ir").

A striking feature in this song is the rising chromatic melody in both the lift and the chorus. In the lift (Ex. 8A, "Desdunémonos pues como viejos amantes"), the melody makes a slow chromatic climb from D to F#, resting on each note for two beats on a single chord; hence, it illustrates the excitement reflected in the text in a manner similar to the chromatic-rise topos for eroticism used by Mozart and other Classical-era composers. Reflecting the text, the rising chromatic melody has a different effect in the chorus (Ex. 8B, "cada dibujo al verme me interrogó"). With the melody on a lower tessitura (at an A below middle C, rather than D above), its placement relative to the bass (a fifth above vs. an octave), and its faster pace (one semitone per beat), the effect it has is one of confusion and complexity rather than rising excitement.

Ex. 8A-"Aunque no esté de moda," Lift

Ex. 8B-"Aunque no esté de moda," Chorus

Both of the above-named sequences have phrases that end in F# major (VI#), which occurs where one might more conventionally expect an F# minor or A major.²⁹ However, the cadences in F# major are not strong; in the chorus, the final F# major is approached by chromatic sequence rather than by a root-position dominant, and in the lift, the final F# is the dominant of B. The lack of resolution creates a level of tension that would not have been achieved with a more conventional A major or F# minor.

The song contains few instances of harmonic confirmation. Not only is the F# major not confirmed but also the A major lacks authentic cadences; the only authentic cadence of the initial key of F# minor are at the beginning of the verse. This lack of authentic cadences helps maintain harmonic tension throughout the song, as progressions sound unfinished. Hence, this lack of harmonic resolution and heightening pitch illustrate musically the songwriter's anxious and unanswered state of affairs.

²⁸ Alternatively, the song could be described as strophic, with four sections, as all sections repeat with similar, but not exactly matching text; for the purposes of this analysis, however, I am assigning names of song parts according to their apparent function.

²⁹ The Beatles also used VI# (e.g. the bridge of "Something"), but in "Aunque no esté de moda," the modulation remains incomplete.

"Al final de este viaje en la vida" ("At the End of This Journey in Life," 1970,) in *Al final de este viaje en la vida***Verse: I=A** (0:16)

A D6maj7 A
I IV I
Al final de este viaje en la vida quedarán
D6maj7 A
IV I
nuestros cuerpos hinchados de ir
D6maj7 D C#m E
IV IV iii V
a la muerte, el odio, al borde del mar.
A (PAC) D6maj7 A
I IV I
Al final de este viaje en la vida quedará
D6maj7 A
IV I
nuestro rastro invitando a vivir.
D6maj7 D C#m E
IV IV iii V
Por lo menos, por eso es que estoy aquí./

At the end of this journey in life will remain

our bodies swollen from approaching

death, hate, at the edge of the sea.

At the end of this journey in life will remain

our trail inviting one to live.

It is for this, at least, that I am here.

Bridge: I = A (0:43)

A (PAC) D E A (PAC)
I IV V I
Somos prehistoria que tendrá el futuro.
A D E A (PAC)
I IV V I
Somos los anales remotos del hombre.
A D E C#m
I IV V iii
Estos años son el pasado del cielo.
C#m D D#o F
iii IV vio bVI
Estos años son cierta agilidad
F F#o Bm F# A
bVI vio ii VI# I
con que el sol te dibuja en el porvenir.
A G#o/D Go/Db F#o/C B
I viio853 bvio853 vio II#
Son la verdad o el fin.
B E4-3 (HC)
II# V
son Dios.

We are prehistoric that we will have the future.

We are distant annals of man.

These years are the past of the heavens.

These years are a certain agility

with the sun portraying you in the future.

They are truth or the end,

they are God.

Refrain: I=A (1:14)

D C#m Bm A E
IV iii ii I V
Quedamos los que puedan sonreír
D C#m Bm A E
IV iii ii I V
en medio de la muerte, en plena luz.
A D6maj7 D C#m E A (PAC)
I IV IV iii V I
en plena luz, en plena luz.

We remain the ones who can smile

amid death, in full light,

in full light, in full light.

Verse) Al final de este viaje (1:53)

en la vida quedará
una cura de tiempo y de amor,
una gasa que envuelva un viejo dolor.
Al final de este viaje
en la vida quedarán
nuestros cuerpos tendidos al sol,
como sábanas blancas después del amor.

At the end of this journey
in life will remain
a cure of time and love,
a gauze that wraps an old sorrow.
At the end of this journey
in life will remain
our bodies laid out to the sun,
like white sheets after lovemaking.

(2:19)

Bridge) Al final del viaje está el horizonte.

Al final de viaje partiremos de nuevo.

Al final de viaje comienza un camino,

otro buen camino que seguir descalzos

contando la arena. Al final del viaje,

estamos tú y yo, intactos...

Refrain) Quedamos los que puedan sonreír...

At the end of the journey is the horizon.
At the end of the journey we will start anew.
At the end of the journey, a path will begin,
another good path that the barefoot follow
counting the sand. At the end of the journey,
you and I are intact.
We remain the ones that can smile

This song, written on Rodríguez's return journey on the *Océano Pacífico* in early 1970, speaks of coming to terms with a difficult past and looks optimistically toward the future. While the song could be described as strophic with a short refrain (at "Quedamos los que puedan sonreír"), its first two couplets can be considered separately from the more modulatory section from "Somos prehistoria" up to "son Dios"; I am labeling this latter section a bridge, as it offers contrasting material and ends on a dominant, while calling the first two couplets a verse.³⁰

The verse speaks to a difficult past ("nuestros cuerpos hinchados de ir/ a la muerte, el odio, al borde del mar," "una cura de tiempo y de amor/una gasa que envuelva un viejo dolor") and the songwriter's overcoming that past ("nuestro rastro invitando a vivir./Por lo menos, por eso es que estoy aquí."). The tonality of the setting is unambiguously in A major, resolving to perfect authentic cadences, and thus provide harmonic grounding to this optimism. The beginning of the bridge carries on this theme of victory over the past (in the second verse, "Al final del viaje está el horizonte./ Al final de viaje partiremos de nuevo"), and the perfect authentic cadences, reiterated with faster harmonic rhythm, continue this firm, if not insistent, harmonic grounding.

Ex. 9A-"Al final de este viaje," Bridge, Refrain

Al fi-nal del via-je co-mien-za un ca - mi - no, ot - ro bien ca - mi - no
[At the end of the journey, a path will begin, another good path]

que se - guir des - cal - zos con - tan - do la a - re - na.
[that the barefoot follow counting the sand.]

Al fi - nal del via - je, es - ta - mos tu y yo, in - ta -
[At the end of the journey, you and I are intact.]

- ac - tos. Que - e - da - mos los que pue - dan son - re - ir
[We remain the ones that can smile]

en me - dio de la muer - te en ple - na luz,
[amid death, in full light.]

en ple - na luz, en ple - na lu - u - uz, en ple - na luz.
[in full light, in full light, in full light.]

However, the tone changes with the third line in the bridge (Ex. 9A, "Al final de viaje comienza un camino"), which ends in a deceptive cadence to C# minor (iii). Then follows a sequence of chromatically ascending and descend-

³⁰ John Covach attributes such characteristics to bridges, and in his definition of them, bridges can appear more than once in a song (Covach 2004: 69, 74-75).

ing diminished chords that prolong the progression, iii-VI-I-II-V. In the first line progressing from iii-VI (“otro buen camino que seguir descalzos/contando la arena”), at the harmonies pause on two chords outside the conventional A major scale -- F (bVI) and F# (VI#)-- like a harmonic representation of the detours taken in life to which the text refers. In the following line, which prolongs I-II-V, a brief pause back on A major are followed by a diminished chord sequence downwards, emphasizing “tú, y yo,” before arriving on V of A. This arrival on a half cadence, following this chromatic turbulence, sounds like a breakthrough to tonal clarity – an apt setting for the word “intactos,” and harmonically symbolic of the composer’s hopeful reemergence from difficult times. The singer’s optimism is reaffirmed by the refrain (“Quedamos los que puedan sonreír”), which descends unambiguously through the A major scale, with emphatic leaps in the melody at “en plena luz.” Hence, the clarity of the verse and refrain, interrupted by the harmonic turbulence of the bridge, with its breakthrough back to the tonic, serve as a harmonic metaphor of overcoming difficulties to achieve a new start. As Rodríguez put it, “en plena luz’....es muy gráfica lo que estoy cantando” (Rodríguez 2006, interview).³¹

31 “‘In full light’ – it’s very graphic what I’m singing here.”

Summary: personal songs up to 1970

In these personal songs, Rodríguez uses many of the same techniques as in his political songs. As with "Debo partirme en dos," "Aunque no esté de moda" and especially "Ojalá" have multiple sections of different moods set in different keys. As with "La era está pariendo un corazón," modal mixture, particularly with iv, is used to paint words momentarily, as in "sonrisa perfecta" in "Ojalá" or "papeles recordandote" in "Te doy una canción."

A striking feature of these personal songs is the marked contrast between stable tonics, often punctuated by perfect authentic cadences, and unstable harmonies to set different aspects of the text. The verse of "Ojalá," addressing memories of a lover, vacillates between D major and D minor, while the chorus, about forgetting, has its C major tonality confirmed by repeated authentic cadences. Similarly, the hopefulness of "Al final de este viaje" is made clear by its perfect authentic cadences in the tonic (A major), interrupted only by the chromatic passage of the bridge. In the chorus of "Te doy una canción," the constant shifting between I (F major) and vi (D minor) set positive and negative aspects of the memory of a person.

Particularly interesting are the chromatic and diminished chords in "Aunque no esté de moda" and "Al final de este viaje." Rodríguez attributes the chromatic and diminished chords of "Al final de este viaje" to the *vieja trova* of Manuel Corona, Miguel Matamoros, and Sindo Garay; indeed, "La canción de la trova," his tribute to Garay, owes much to this style (Rodríguez 2006, interview). These artists frequently used diminished chords as applied dominants, neighbor chords, or passing chords which added momentary color without straying far from the harmonies of the tonic. Such is the function of the diminished chords in Rodríguez's "Esta canción" (1967), "Historia de la silla" (1969), "La vergüenza" (1970), "Rabo de nube" (1978), "El trovador de barro negro" (1980), "Ángel para un final" (1977), and "El sol no da de beber" (1981).

However, I believe the use of diminished chords in "Aunque no esté de moda" and "Al final de este viaje" differs in function or rhythmic emphasis from those songs. Rodríguez also noticed a difference: "Los trovadores hicieron tres o cuatro acordes disminuidos

de abajo, pero yo lo hice por arriba. Pero me dije, funciona. Increíble" (Rodríguez 2006, interview).³² This ascending motion provides the sequence a different harmonic and semantic function from the usual descending-chord sequence of boleros.³³ In terms of rhythmic emphasis, Rodríguez lingers for a full measure on the diminished chord at "Desnudémonos pues como viejos amantes" in "Aunque no esté de moda," even though it has a passing function; as previously mentioned, in the bridge of "Al final de este viaje," he pauses at the unrelated chords of bVI and VI# during the chromatic climb. In addition, the goal harmony for both chromatic passages is VI# (F# major), which is not diatonically related to the tonic (A major), while the harmonic goals of diminished chords in the other songs named above are V or I.

Both passages set a text that expresses excitement, which was also associated with rising chromatic runs in Mozart and other classical music. While not verbalizing the typical topos associated with diminished-chord sequences in classical music, Rodríguez acknowledges: "Ninguna otra música me influencia más fuerte que la música clásica. Yo escuchaba la música clásica desde niño del radio CMBF" (Rodríguez 2006, interview).³⁴ However, he also believes that he may have picked up some of these topoi of classical music indirectly through *vieja trovadores* and bolero players, who listened to classical music and Italian opera, imitated their musical characteristics, and incorporated them into their music, citing the chromaticism of Sindo Garay's "Germania," which shows the influence of German Lied (Rodríguez 2006, interview).

Whichever the original source of inspiration, Rodríguez's harmonies in these personal songs are more volatile and elaborate than in his political ones, and the songwriter, unrestrained by neither institution nor academy, experimented with a wide variety of chord progressions to depict the more complex emotions referenced in "Al final de este viaje" or "Ojalá." Following the institutionalization of *nueva trova* and musical education at ICAIC, his harmonic language appeared to become somewhat more conservative, adding chromatic neighbor or passing chords but not straying so far from the diatonic range.

32 "The traditional Cuban troubadours played three or four diminished chords as a sequence going down, but I played them going up. But I said to myself, 'It works. Incredible.'"

33 Recent examples include "Palabras" and "En la imaginación" by Marta Valdés (2006).

34 "No other music influenced me so much as classical music. I listened to classical music on radio CMBF since I was a child."

Songs of the 1970s: allusions to nature and surrealism

The 1970s brought several important events in Rodríguez's career. Upon his return from his boat trip in 1970, Rodríguez rejoined the Grupo de Experimentación Sonora of ICAIC. This organization gave him some legitimacy as a film composer and offered him an opportunity to make recordings, take classes in music theory, and collaborate with other musicians. The group included singer-songwriters Pablo Milanés, Noel Nicola, and Sara González, as well as guitarists Sergio Vitier and Pablo Menéndez (Díaz Pérez 1994b: 194). As Brouwer recalls, neither Rodríguez, Milanés, nor Nicola knew how to read music at the time. He designed an intensive course on the techniques of music that crammed perhaps six to eight years of training into about a year and a half. Juan Elósegui taught solfège; Federico Smith, who had arranged several of Rodríguez's songs for orchestra in 1967, taught harmony and counterpoint; Jerónimo Labrada taught electroacoustics; and Brouwer taught form, orchestration, and aesthetics (Díaz Pérez 1994b: 194).

Although the group was originally formed in April, 1969, with Rodríguez as an original member, it had not been fully operational at the time Rodríguez left on the *Playa Girón* due to a lack of instrumental musicians (Rodríguez 2006, interview). When he returned and re-entered the group, classes had already been in operation for a few months. Having missed these initial classes, he admits to having had difficulty following the classes in music theory, particularly as he did not know how to notate music at the time:

Yo no entendía las clases de armonía y contrapunto. Las mejores clases yo me las perdí porque no estaba de la altura de estas clases. Yo tenía que empezar por saber lo que era la música. Tenía una idea (de) la escritura musical, pero muy pobre. Tuve que empezar por escribir mi propia canción. Cuando yo supe escribir mis propias canciones, allí me ocurrían otras cosas. Pero mientras que yo no supe escribir, no me ocurrieron. Y estudiaba Xenakis. Muy duro. Entonces una persona que no sabía escribir una melodía no iba entender Xenakis. Imposible. Yo me sentía inútil. Y sentía que no podía realmente entender lo que me estaba diciendo, si yo no sabía escribir una melodía. (Rodríguez 2006, interview).³⁵

Nonetheless, Rodríguez believes he learned some valuable lessons at ICAIC, particularly the notation of his own songs and the analysis of forms. However, he also felt that many of the techniques he learned had already been part of his style:

Yo creo que lo más útil que yo tengo del Grupo Sonoro es haber aprendido a escribir mis canciones. También aprendimos la música de serialismo, la música electrónica, a componer como colectivo, a repartir una obra de veinte, treinta minutos, a analizar el desarrollo de la forma. Por ejemplo, el segundo movimiento de la séptima de Beethoven. Conocer esas cosas es muy útil. Pero yo me di cuenta de que yo hacía esas cosas ya de antes (Rodríguez 2006, interview).³⁶

A second important event was the institutionalization of *nueva trova*. By the mid-1960s, Latin American countries such as Chile and Argentina had already developed movements of song called *nueva canción*, whose socially conscious texts, simple acoustic arrangements, and inclusion of folk elements held much in common with *nueva trova*. As early as the mid-1960s, such artists were featured in pan-Latin American song festivals in Havana, sponsored by the Consejo Nacional de Cultura (Díaz Pérez 1994b: 85-86); Victor Jara, Isabel and Angel Parra, and Inti Illimani performed at the Casa de las Américas in Havana in the early 1970s (Díaz Pérez 1994:229). From 1971, Chilean *nueva canción* artists including Jara traveled all around Latin America as cultural ambassadors to the socialist government of Salvador Allende, and Cuba was a part of their itineraries (González 2006).

Moore believes that the desire of the government to find common cultural ground with other Latin American countries, particularly Allende's Chile, helped to make *nueva trova* more acceptable. As in Chile, Cuban *nueva trova* artists came to be invited to international festivals in Latin America; by the mid-1970s, these singer-songwriters were featured in annual festivals in Cuba. *Nueva trova* was officially institutionalized as the Movimiento de la Nueva Trova (MNT) by 1973, complete with a registry of members, a board of directors, dedicated performance spaces, and organized events (Moore 2006:

35 "I didn't understand the classes in harmony and counterpoint. The best classes I missed because I wasn't at the level of these classes. I needed to start by knowing what was music. I had an idea of musical notation, but barely. I needed to start by writing my own songs. When I knew how to write my own songs, then other things occurred to me. But while I didn't know how to notate, they didn't occur to me. And we were studying Xenakis. Very difficult. Hence, a person who didn't know how to write down a melody wasn't going to understand Xenakis. Impossible. I felt useless. And I felt that I couldn't really understand what they were saying to me, if I didn't know how to write a melody."

36 "I believe that the most useful thing I learned from the Grupo Sonoro was to learn how to write my own songs. We also learned about serial music, electronic music, how to compose collaboratively, and how to spread a work over 20-30 minutes, how to analyze the development of a form. For example, the second movement of Beethoven's seventh symphony. To know these things is very useful. But I also realized that I had already been doing these things before."

154-155). Rodríguez's *Días y flores* (1975), produced by the state recording company EGREM, was the first widely distributed LP by a nueva trova artist (Moore 2006: 156); two songs from this album will be analyzed in this section.

According to Moore, the lyrics of the *nueva trovadores* began to change as the artists moved from a small fan base to wide exposure in the media and sponsorship from highly-ranked government officials (Moore 2006: 156-157). Indeed, in Rodríguez's works of the 1970s onwards, texts with anti-imperialistic or nationalistic references may be more common than previously. Such songs include "Madre" (1972), a protest over the war in Vietnam; "Me acosa el carapálida" (1979), about imperialism; "Canción urgente para Nicaragua" (1980), professing solidarity with the Sandinistas; "El tiempo está a favor de los pequeños" (1982), a song of similar spirit for El Salvador; and "El Mayor" (1973), an elegy for national hero Ignacio Agramonte y Loynaz.³⁷ A more noticeable change are the songs that seem to encourage a behavioral ideal, such as the collectivity espoused by "Vamos a andar" (1978) or "No hacen falta alas" (1984).

Another feature of Rodríguez's lyrics from the 1970s onwards was the use of metaphorical texts. While metaphors and allegories can also be found in his earlier songs (e.g. "Historia de las sillas" (1969)), some songs from the 1970s have poignant texts referring to natural (or surreal) phenomena that could be read to be metaphors for something else. For example, in "En el claro de la luna" (1974), the singer refers to his beloved goddess of fortune, evoking images of moonlight, sun, wind, and waterfalls, but dreams of freedom and that which he cannot say. Similarly, the initial verses of "Yo digo que las estrellas" (1975) refer to the beauty of the stars before giving way to a message against those who believe they are more important than they are.

In this section, I will provide an analysis of four songs referring to natural or surreal phenomena that may serve as textual metaphors for other concepts. These include "Mariposas" (1972), from Rodríguez's days at ICAIC; "Como esperando abril" (1975) and "Sueño con serpientes" (1974), from his first album, *Días y flores*; and "La gaviota" (1976), about the Angolan war.

³⁷ It should be noted, however, that among his pre-MNT songs were protests against Vietnam or imperialism (e.g., "El rey de flores" (1970)) or elegies to Revolutionary heroes (e.g., the previously analyzed songs for Che, "Canción del elegido" (1969) for Abel Santamaria).

"Mariposas" ("Butterflies," 1972) in *Mariposas*

Intro: F4 Bb9-F6-Bb9-Gm7-Fm7 Bb9

Verse: I=Bb mixolydian->F min (01:00)

Bb9	F9
I	V
Hoy viene a ser como la cuarta vez que espero	Today will be the fourth time I wait
Bb9	F9
I	V
desde que sé que no vendrás más nunca.	since I've known you will never come again.
Ab7+	Dbd7+
bVII=III/v	i=Fm: VI
He vuelto a ser aquel cantor del aguacero	I've returned to be that singer of the downpour
Ab7+	Dbd7+
III	VI
que hizo casi legal su abrazo a tu cintura.	that makes his embrace of your waist almost legal.
Fm9/C	
i°4	
Y tú apareces, por mi ventana,	And you appear, at my window,
Go7/C	
iii7	
suave pequeña, con alas blancas.	gentle little one, with white wings.
Fo/C	
viii643/V	
Yo ni respiro, para que duermas	I don't even breathe, so that you sleep
C4 - 3	
V	
y no te vayas.	and you don't go away.

Bridge: I=F->Bb (1:42)

Bb	F
IV	I
Qué maneras más curiosas	What strange ways
Bb	F
IV	I
de recordar tiene uno.	that one has in order to remember.
Bb	Gm
IV	ii=vi/IV
Qué maneras más curiosas.	What strange ways.
Eb	F
I=Bb:IV	V
Hoy recuerdo mariposas	Today I remember butterflies
Bb (IAC) Bb/A Gm Gm/F	
I	vi
que ayer sólo fueron humo.	that yesterday were only smoke.
Eb	F
IV	V
Mariposas, mariposas	Butterflies, butterflies
Bb (IAC) D	Gm Bb6/F
I	V/vi vi I
que emergieron de lo oscuro.	that emerged from the dark,
Eb	Cm F
IV	ii V
bailarinas, silenciosas...	dancers, silent.

Chorus: I=Bb mixolydian (2:15)

Ab	Eb/G
bVII	IV6
¿Tu tiempo es ahora una mariposa,	Your time is now a butterfly,
Bb9	F9
I	V
navecita blanca, delgada, nerviosa.	little white ship, thin, nervous.
Ab	Eb/G
bVII	IV6
Siglos atrás inundaron un segundo	centuries ago, they flooded for a second
Bb9	F4 F
I	V
debajo del cielo, encima del mundo. :/	under the heavens, on top of the world.

Verse) Así eras tú en aquellas tardes divertidas.
Así eras tú de furibunda compañera.
Eras como esos días en que eres la vida
y todo lo que tocas se hace primavera.
Ay, mariposa! Tú eres el alma
de los guerreros que aman y cantan,
y eres el nuevo ser, que se asoma
por mi garganta.

Bridge/Chorus) Qué manera más curiosa...

You were that way in those fun afternoons.
You were a furious companion.
You were as in those days when you are life itself,
and everything you touch becomes spring.
Butterfly! You are the soul
of warriors who love and sing
and are the new being, that appears
from my throat.

Trans

10

This song, composed while Rodríguez was at ICAIC, refers to the ancient Mesoamerican belief that butterflies were symbols of the soul of warriors killed in battle. As he recounts, they also represent memory in this song:

[Las mariposas fue] para la cultura nahuatl que crecía en el Valle de México cuando llegaron los conquistadores (después no creció casi nada). Las mariposas simbolizaban el alma de los guerreros que, habiendo caído en combate, regresaban a la tierra de esa forma colorida y hermosa para embellecer la vida de los hombres. En este caso, el símbolo está tomado en el sentido de la añoranza, del recuerdo (Godoy 1984: 41).³⁸

The song is composed of three sections: a verse, bridge, and chorus, all of which end on a half cadence. The first two couplets of the verse recalls a departed lover ("Hoy viene a ser como la cuarta vez que espero/desde que sé que no vendrás más nunca," "Así eras tú en aquellas tardes divertidas"). The accompanying harmonies shift from Bb major in the first couplet to Ab major in the second, like flashing memories. The last two couplets of the verse refer to the butterfly, as either a natural phenomenon or literary metaphor for memory in the first verse ("Y tú apareces, por mi ventana/suave pequeña, con alas blancas"), and as a reference to the Nahuatl myth in the second ("Ay, mariposa! Tú eres el alma/de los guerreros que aman y cantan"). These couplets are accompanied by a dominant pedal on F minor, beautifully embellished by diminished chords plucked on the guitar, played in rising inversions as if to imitate the fluttering of a butterfly.³⁹ The harmonies, too, seem to imitate butterflies in flight; just in the verse, they have floated from Bb to Ab to F minor (via V) without confirming these keys with a cadence.

Similarly, the bridge does not stay in one key. It starts with two harmonic surprises: it resolves to F major rather than F minor, and it does so by way of Bb. Again, the harmony does not rest there long; F is quickly reinterpreted as a dominant, highlighting the first appearance of the title word "mariposas." This dominant resolves in an imperfect authentic cadence (in Bb) at "que ayer solo fueron humo." This cadence and its repeat are the only authentic cadences in the entire song, which concretizes the image of the butterflies. This imagery is further enhanced by the impressionistic playing of the guitar, whose quick chord-plucking with rapid changes in dynamics recalls the fluttering of butterflies.

As with the bridge, the chorus (Ex. 10A) does not begin as expected; the F at the end of the bridge does not resolve to Bb but to Ab. The chorus is a double-plagal progression (two back-to-back progressions of falling fourths) to Bb and one plagal further to F; the chords are repeated in a potentially unending cycle. Such an inconclusive progression seems appropriate for the text, which refers to the reincarnated warriors, who are displaced from time, or the timelessness of a fond memory ("Tu tiempo es ahora una mariposa/. . . Siglos atrás inundaron un segundo"). There are no perfect authentic cadences to tie the butterflies down.

Ex. 10A – "Mariposas," Chorus

Thus, Rodríguez musically depicts butterflies, reincarnation, and memory effectively in this song through the use of onomatopoeic accompaniment; frequent, but not jarring, modulations; and a circular progression. The frequent fluctuations in harmony and dynamics are reminiscent of butterflies that flutter from flower to flower; they do not stay grounded for very long.

38 "[Butterflies were] for the Nahuatl culture, which flourished in the Valley of Mexico at the time that the conquistadores came (afterwards almost nothing grew). Butterflies symbolized the soul of warriors, who having fallen in battle, returned to earth in this colorful and beautiful form in order to embellish the life of men. In this case, the symbol has taken the sense of yearning and remembrance."

39 Comments on the guitar accompaniment are based on the recording included in the 1999 CD *Mariposas*, played by Rey Guerra.

"Como esperando abril" ("As If Waiting for April," 1975?), in *Días y flores, Canciones urgentes*

Intro: C-Dm-C-Dm-C-Am-F G

Chorus: I=C major (0:27)

C Dm C
I ii I
Mucho más allá de mi ventana,
Dm C
ii I
las nubes de la mañana
C Am F G
I vi IV V
son una flor que le ha nacido al tren.
C (PAC) Dm C
I ii I
Un reloj se transforma en cangrejo,
Dm C
ii I
y la capa de un viejo
Am F G
vi IV V
da con una tempestad de comején.

Bridge: -->E-->V/C (0:56)

Am Fm D
vi iv II#
Mucho más allá de mi ventana,
B7 E
V/III# III#
algodones jugaban a hacer un jardín
B7 G
VII#7 V
en espera de abril.

Verse: i=C minor (1:04)

Cm D
i II#
Luego entro, los ojos
Fm Cm
iv i
chorreando esa luz de infinito,
Bb F
bVII V/bVII
y es cuando necesito
D/F# G
II# V
un perro, un bastón, una mano, una fe.
Cm (PAC) D
i II#
Y tú pasas tocando
Fm Cm
iv i
el frío con suave silencio
Bb F
bVII V/bVII
y ciego te sentencio
D/F# G
II# V
a que nombres todo lo que ahora no sé.

Chorus) Mucho más allá de mi ventana...

Bridge) Mucho más allá de mi ventana...

Chorus) Mucho más allá de mi ventana
mi esperanza jugaba a una flor
C F C
a un jardín como esperando abril.

Far beyond my window,

the morning clouds form a flower

born from a train.

A clock changes into a crab,

and an old man's cape runs into

a tempest of termites.

Far beyond my window,

cotton flowers play at forming a garden

waiting for April.

Then I come inside, my eyes

flooding with infinite light.

And that is when I need a dog,

a cane, a hand, faith.

And you pass by touching

the cold with gentle silence

and, blind, I sentence you to name

everything I don't know.

Far beyond my window

Far beyond my window

Far beyond my window
my hope plays at being a flower

a garden as if waiting for April.

*From translation by Rina Benmayor and Félix Cortés included in
Canciones urgentes: Silvio Rodríguez, 1991

Esta canción empieza con mucho optimismo en Do mayor. Una persona está mirando la humedad desde la ventana. Y cuando pasa en Do menor, (canta) “y luego entro los ojos, chorreando en luz infinito,” es cuando uno está mirando a la luminosidad del día y después mira el interior de la casa. Se queda ciego, en ese momento, porque mira a la penumbra. (Canta) “Y tu pasas tocando el suelo con suave silencio”—porque no tiene zapatos—“y ciego”—porque en este momento no veo—“te sentencio”—como a ella yo diga, como llaman esas cosas, porque en ese momento yo no veo. Es una metáfora poco aparatosa. . .

También puede significar la fantasía afuera y la realidad adentro. Pero uno vuelve a la realidad de lo hay, teniendo alguien. Es importante de no estar solo en ese momento de ceguera, porque es cuando necesito una copa a vivir. Es muy romántico. Siempre me pareció esta canción como un cuadro de [René] Magritte, donde hay muchas ventanas (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁴⁰

This allegorical song has an opening section in C major which I am labeling as the chorus (as it recurs with identical text); a modulatory bridge; and a contrasting middle section in C minor, which I am labeling the verse.

The chorus (Ex. 11A) finds the narrator looking out of his window, imagining the clouds to take fantastic shapes (“Las nubes de la mañana son una flor/que le ha nacido al tren./ Un reloj se transforma en cangrejo/ y la capa de un viejo/da con una tempestad de comejen.”) The familiar diatonic progression I-vi-IV-V, the arpeggios in the melody (“una flor”), and the instrumental setting with flutes and strings render a relentless cheerfulness to the song.

Ex. 11A-“Como esperando abril,” Chorus

Mu-cho más al-lá de mi ven-ta-na, las nu-bes de la ma-ña-na
[Far beyond my window, the morning clouds]

- na son un-a flor que le ha na-ci-do al tren.
[form a flower born from a train.]

In the verse (Ex. 11B), as Rodríguez has described above, the narrator steps back into his apartment from the window, whereupon the listener discovers he is blind—temporary or otherwise (“es cuando necesito un perro/un bastón, una mano, una fe”). In his blindness, he makes requests (or demands) of his companion or caretaker (“y ciego, te sentencio a que nombres/todo lo que ahora no sé”). The contrast in text between this verse and the chorus is underlined by its setting in C minor, the parallel minor of the chorus. These parallel keys reflect two opposing views between the chorus and verse: the light of the Caribbean sun vs. the darkness of an apartment (or blindness), as explicitly stated in the text – or more metaphorically, the fantasy that an individual or society wants to see vs. the reality of his existence.

40 “This song starts optimistically in C major. A person is looking out at the humidity from the window. And when the song passes into C minor (sings from song) ‘and then I enter with my eyes flooding with infinite light,’ is when one is looking at the brightness of the day and afterwards, one looks into the interior of the house. One remains blinded, in that moment, because one is looking at the semidarkness. (Sings) ‘And you pass by touching the floor with soft silence’—because you don’t have shoes—‘and blind’—because at this moment I can’t see—‘I sentence you’—as if I were to say to her, ‘What do you call those things,’ because at his moment I can’t see. It’s a metaphor that’s a little exaggerated.

“It could also mean the fantasy outside and the reality inside. But one returns to the reality that exists, having someone there. It’s important not to be alone in that moment of blindness, because that’s when you need a glass to live. It’s very romantic. This song always seemed to me like a painting by [René] Magritte, where there are many windows.”

Ex. 11B-“Como esperando abril,” Verse (C minor section)

Cm i D V/V Fm iv Cm i
 Lue-go ent-ro los oj - os chor-rean - do e - sa luz in - fi - ni - to,
 [Then I come inside, my eyes flooded with infinite light.]
 B^b bVII F IV D V/V G V
 y es cuan-do ne - cesi - to un per - ro, un bas - tón, una ma - no, una fe.
 [And that is when I need a dog, a cane, a hand, faith.]

Joining the two sections is a modulatory sequence (Bridge, “Mucho más allá de mi ventana/algodones jugaban a hacer un jardín/en espera de abril”) that steps down by thirds, hinting at C minor (through F minor=iv/Cm), G major (through D major=V/G), E major, and C major (through G major=V/C) along the way. The shifting tonalities seem illustrative of clouds changing shape, or more metaphorically, changing perceptions in society, with the people waiting expectantly for better times.

"Sueño con serpientes" ("Dream of Serpents," 1974), in *Días y flores, Canciones Urgentes*

«Hay hombres que luchan un día
y son buenos.
Hay otros que luchan un año
y son mejores.
Hay quienes luchan muchos años
y son muy buenos.
Pero hay los que luchan toda la vida:
Esos son los imprescindibles».
Bertolt Brecht

There are men who struggle one day
and they are good.
There are others who struggle one year
and they are better.
There are those who struggle for many years
and they are better still.
But there are those who struggle all their lives;
Those are the indispensable ones.
Bertolt Brecht

Verse: I=G mixolydian (0:50)

G
I
Sueño con serpientes,
G
I
con serpientes de mar,
Dm
v
con cierto mar, Ay!
F C G
VII IV I
de serpientes, sueño yo.

I dream of serpents,
serpents of the sea.
A certain sea, oh,
of serpents, I dream.

Verse) Largas, transparentes y en sus barrigas llevan
lo que puedan arrebatarse al amor.

Long, transparent, and in their bellies they carry
all that they can snatch away from love.

Chorus: I=G mixolydian (1:24)

Dm F C G
v VII IV I
¡Oh!
Dm F C G
v VII IV I
La mato y aparece una mayor.
Dm F C G
v VII IV I
¡Oh!
Dm F C G
v VII IV I
con mucho mas infierno en digestión.

Oh,
I kill one and a larger one appears,
oh,
with even more hellfire burning inside.

Verse) No quepo en su boca, me trata de tragar
pero se atora con un trébol de mi sien.
Creo que está loca, le doy de masticar una paloma
y la enveneno de mi bien.

(2:15) I don't fit in its mouth, it tries to swallow me.
But it chokes on the top of my temple.
I think it is crazy; I give it a dove to chew,
and I poison it with my goodness.

Chorus) ¡Oh! La mato...

Oh, I kill one . . .

Verse) Ésta al fin me engulle,
y mientras por su esófago paseo,
voy pensando en que vendrá.
Pero se destruye
cuando llego a su estómago
y planteo con un verso, una verdad.

This one finally gulps me down,
and while I am passing through his esophagus,
I am thinking of what is to come.
But it is destroyed
when I arrive at his stomach
and I pose a verse of truth.

Chorus) ¡Oh!
La mato y aparece una mayor.
¡Oh!
con mucho más infierno
en digestión.

Oh,
I kill one and a bigger one appears.
Oh,
with even more hellfire
burning inside.

Bb F Em
bIII VII vi
¡Oooooooooh!
Bb F Am Em D
bIII VII ii vi V
La mato y aparece una mayor.
Dm F-C-G-Dm-F-C-G
¡Oooooooooh!

(4:45) Oh!
I kill one and a bigger one appears.
Oh!

*From translation, with some revisions, in *Canciones urgentes*: Silvio Rodríguez, 1991

This song recounts Rodríguez's dream, where he kills serpents, only to have larger ones arise. As the songwriter puts it,

Yo soñé con esa música. Y fue un sueño con serpientes; había serpientes en el sueño. Recuerdo que me desperté de madrugada. Y tenía una grabadora al lado de la cama. La guitarra también. Y toqué un pedazo de la música que había escuchado en el sueño. Y al día siguiente cuando me desperté, escuché la música y terminé la canción. Eh...todavía de cama (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁴¹

Various writers have speculated that the song symbolizes the never-ending struggle through life's conflicts, the truth found by facing one's hidden fears, absolute truths and false images that mislead people, or political systems which sow the seeds of their own destruction (Godoy 1984: 46). When I mentioned this last hypothesis of politics to Rodríguez, he remarked that open-ended songs are amenable to different interpretations, which he preferred to leave up to the listener:

Las canciones que son muy abiertas, y cualquier mensaje que es abierto, se puede prestar con esta interpretación. Y la metáfora también ayuda en que contiene un sentido abierto. Se puede, como es una canción extraña en cuanto lo que contaba. . . sueño con serpientes, con serpientes de mar. Yo quise vincular a alguna idea que le pudiera dar una orientación a quién escucha, para que se diera orientación a persona que escucha. Y por eso le puso un verso de Brecht. A correr del verso de Brecht, vincula la razón por una dialéctica (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁴²

Nonetheless, he himself found it to be an allegory of the never-ending struggles of life:

Creo que estaba pensando en un sentido general de la existencia de la vida, de un sentido muy simbólico, de que como cuando uno empieza a la escuela, tiene que ir al primer grado. Solamente cuando vence la asignatura del primer grado puede pasar al segundo. Y que la vida es algo parecido, en todos sentidos. Que hay que enfrentar, superar, para poder enfrentar luego otro...porque superar un problema grande no hace más que prepararte para uno mayor (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁴³

Rodríguez's own explanation, as well as the preface by Bertolt Brecht, would argue for this interpretation of never-ending struggle. Nonetheless, the text contains several references regarding the conflict between an individual's principles and a system: "[la serpiente] se destruye/cuando . . . planteo con un verso, una verdad," and "[la serpiente] me trata de tragar/pero se atora con un trébol de mi sien."

Suitable to a circular, never-ending allegory, the song consists of a four-chord sequence that stays constant throughout the song. The mode is mixolydian, with D minor (v) occurring rather than D major (V). As a result, there are no V-I cadences. All the cadences can be interpreted either as an elaboration of the VII-I cadence, familiar in rock music, or as plagal cadences, reached through a circle of fourths, i.e. F (VII) ÷ C (IV) ÷ G (I) (Ex. 12A). This double-plagal cadence, as dubbed by Walter Everett, has been common in rock music of the late 1960s and beyond, with a few well-known examples including "With a Little Help from My Friends" (Beatles, 1967), "Sympathy for the Devil" (Rolling Stones, 1968), and "Volunteers" (Jefferson Airplane, 1969) (Everett 1999: 103).

Ex. 12A—"Sueño con serpientes," Verse

G (Mixolydian) I

Sue - ño con ser - pien - te - es, con ser - pien - tes de mar,
[I dream of serpents, serpents of the sea.]

Dm v F VII C IV G I

con - cier - to mar, Ay! de ser - pien - tes sue - ño yo.
[A certain sea, oh, of serpents, I dream.]

The complete avoidance of V-I cadences seems conscious: Even in the final repeat of the refrain, when the dominant D finally appears, the authentic cadence is avoided with a return to the double-plagal pattern. With this repeating four-chord pattern in double-plagal cadences, the circular harmonies seem a musical metaphor for the textual theme of endless struggle.

41 "I dreamed with this music. It was a dream with serpents; there were serpents in the dream. I remember that I woke up in the wee hours of the morning. And I had a tape recorder beside the bed. A guitar, too. And I played a part of the music that I had heard in the dream. And the next day when I woke up, I listened to the music and finished the song. Uh. . . still in bed."

42 "Songs that are very open, and any message that is open, could be given that interpretation. And the metaphor also helps in that it has an open meaning. One could, as it is a strange song in its story. . . A dream of serpents, of serpents in the sea. I wanted to connect to some idea to which I could give an orientation to the listener. And for this reason I put it in the verse from Brecht. The reasoning for a dialectic is tied to the flow of the verse from Brecht."

43 "I believe I was thinking in a general sense about existence and life, in a very symbolic sense. For example, when one starts school, one first has to go to first grade. Only when one completes the requirements of first grade can one go on to second grade. And life is something like that, in all senses. One has to confront and overcome one thing in order to be able to confront yet another. . . because to overcome a big problem does nothing more than to prepare you for another, bigger one."

"La gaviota" ("The Seagull," 1976), in *Unicornio*

Verse: i=C#m (=vi/E) (00:34)

C#m9	A9
i	VI
Corrían los días de fines de guerra,	
C#m9	A9
i	VI
había un soldado regresando intacto,	
C#m9	A9
i	VI
intacto del frío mortal de la tierra.	
C#m9	A9
i	VI
intacto de flores de horror en su cuarto.	

Verse) Elevó los ojos, respiró profundo,
la palabra cielo se hizo en su boca.
Y como si no hubiera más en el mundo,
por el firmamento pasó una gaviota.

Pre-chorus: I=E major (1:32)

E	E4	E	E4
I			
Gaviota, gaviota, vals del equilibrio,			
F#m			
ii			
cadencia increíble, llamada en el hombro.			
G#m	A		
iii	IV		
Gaviota, gaviota, blancura de lirio.*			
C#m	B		
vi	V		
aire y bailarina, gaviota de asombro.			

Chorus: I=E major (1:56)

F#m	Am
ii	iv
¿Adónde te marchas, canción de la brisa.	
E	Bm C#7
I	iv/ii V/ii
tan rápida, tan detenida?	
F#m (PAC)	B
ii	V
Disparo en la sien y metralla en la risa,	
E	G# C#m B A9
I	V/vi vi V IV
gaviota que pasa y se lleva la vida.	

Verse) Corrían los días de fines de guerra,
pasó una gaviota volando, volando,
lenta como un tiempo de amor que se cierra,
imperio de ala, de cielo y de cuando.

Pre-chorus) Gaviota, gaviota, vals del equilibrio...

Chorus) Corrían los días de fines de guerra,
pasó una gaviota volando,
y él que anduvo intacto
rodó por la tierra,
huérfano, desnudo,
herido, sangrando.

In the days at the end of the war,

There was a soldier who returned intact,

intact in the mortal cold of the earth,

intact in the flowers of horror in his room.

He raised his eyes, breathing deeply
the word "heaven" formed in his mouth.
And as if there were nothing more in the world,
a seagull passed through the sky.

Seagull, seagull, waltz of balance,

an incredible rhythm expressed in its shoulders.

Seagull, seagull, as white as a lily,

Like a dancer, a marvellous seagull.

Where are you going, song of the breeze,

So quickly, so held back?

Shot in the temple and shrapnel in the laugh,

Seagull who passes by and carries away life.

So ran the days of the end of the war,
a seagull passed flying, flying,
slow like time when love is ending,
empire of wings, heavens, and time.

Seagull, seagull, waltz of balance

So ran the days of the end of the war,
a seagull passed flying,
and he that walked intact
rolled onto the ground,
defenseless, bare,
wounded, bloody.

* The version of the lyrics in the sleeve to the CD *Unicornio* shows "delirio" (delirium) as one word, while *Antología*, Casaus (1984), and other sources have "de lirio."

Rodríguez was one of the first performers who volunteered for the Angolan War, to which Cuban troops were being sent; he originally signed up as a radio-telegrapher before a movement was organized to send entertainers to the front. He was not alone; other *trovadores* who departed for Angola around that time included the Manguaré group, Vicente Feliú, and Víctor Casaus (Casaus 1984: 239; Díaz Pérez 1995: 148). Rodríguez explained this willingness to participate as follows:

Nuestra generación no pudo participar en la lucha insurreccional; recuerdo que cuando Fidel despedía al primer grupo que se iba para Angola, decía que todos los jóvenes necesitan un Moncada, y que el nuestro era el internacionalismo proletario.⁴⁴ (Díaz Pérez 1995: 151)

Organized as an artistic mission, these *trovadores* traveled throughout Angola, visiting battlefronts and liberated zones from February and July of 1976, and again from November, 1976 to January, 1977, the latter trip accompanied by Pablo Milanés, Noel Nicolás, Vicente Feliú, and Virulo. Songs that Rodríguez wrote or sang during these tours included “Aceitunas,” “Canción de identidad,” “Canción para mi soldado,” “Testamento,” and “Pioneros” (Díaz Pérez 1995: 160-161).

Ex. 13A-“La gaviota,” Pre-chorus and Chorus

Ex. 13A-“La gaviota,” Pre-chorus and Chorus

Chord symbols: E I, F#m ii, G#m iii, A IV, C#m vi, B V, F#m ii, Am iv, E I, Bm iv/ii, C#7 V7/ii, F#m ii, B V, A IV, E I, G# V/vi, C#m vi, B V, A IV, C#m vi.

Lyrics and Translations:

Ga-vio - ta, ga-vio - ta, — vals_ del e - qui-li- brio, ca-den-cia in-cre-i- ble,
[Seagull, seagull, waltz of balance, an incredible rhythm]

lla - ma-da en el hom - bro. Ga - vio - ta, ga-vio - ta - a, blan - cu - ra de li - rio, —
[expressed in its shoulders, Seagull, seagull, as white as a lily.]

ai - re y bai - la - ri - na, ga - vio - ta de a - som - bro. A - dón - de te mar - chas,
[like a dancer, a marvellous seagull. Where are you going.]

can - ción de la bri - sa, tan rá - pi - da, tan de - te - ni - da? —
[song of the breeze, so quickly, so held back?]

Dis - pa - ro en la sien y me - tra - lla en la ri - sa, ga - vio - ta que pa - sa
[Shot in the temple and shrapnel in the laugh, seagull who passes by]

y se lle - va la vi - i - i - da.
[and carries away life.]

“La gaviota” contrasts the images of a dead soldier (verse, “Había un soldado regresando intacto/intacto del frío mortal de la tierra”) with that of a soaring seagull (pre-chorus and chorus).⁴⁵ Rodríguez uses two tonalities to con-

44 “Our generation could not participate in the insurrection; I remember when Fidel saw off the first group going to the Angolan War; he said that all young people needed a Moncada (attack on a garrison in Santiago de Cuba in 1953, led by Castro, that sparked off the Cuban Revolution), and that ours was that of proletarian internationalism.”

45 As with “Aunque no esté de moda” and other songs by Rodríguez, the song is perhaps best conceived of as a strophic song with several sections. As a matter of convenience, I have labeled the sections as “verse” for the quiet, initial section; pre-chorus for the introduction to the song’s climax; and chorus for the song’s climax.

TRANS

10

trast these images: C# minor for the verse, with its images of death, and the relative major E for the graceful flight of the seagull (pre-chorus, "Gaviota, gaviota, vals del equilibrio"). Harmonic patterns also fit these images; the verse is harmonically static, shifting regularly between the two chords C# minor and A major, whose common tones seem to increase this static sense. Meanwhile, the harmonies in the pre-chorus (Ex. 13A) climb higher step by step, from E to A, as does the melody in parallel, effectively painting a bird gaining altitude in flight.

In the chorus, the seagull seems to symbolize the leaving of life ("gaviota que pasa y se lleva la vida"). In contrast to the preceding sections, the harmonies here become more volatile as this taking of life is described. The chorus starts in a deceptive cadence to F# minor ("Adónde te marchas"), mixes mode by using A minor (iv) ("canción de la brisa"), and only briefly returns to the tonic before reaching the words "Disparo en la sien" –the moment of death, and arguably the climax of the song. These words are set in the only perfect authentic cadence in the song, which is in F# minor (ii) - a key other than either one of the tonics; it is as if this moment of death is given more harmonic certainty than life. The chorus, however, continues to an inconclusive end harmonically, with "se lleva la vida" ending on A (IV/E); this chord circles back to C# minor. Hence, Rodríguez uses a major key and its relative minor to paint the opposite poles of life and death, volatile harmonies encompassing major and minor modes to describe the taking of life, and a perfect authentic cadence to show the conclusiveness of death over life. The song finishes on the death key of C# minor.

Summary: songs of the 1970s

The songs of the 1970s show a continuity of Rodríguez's harmonic techniques, coupled with refinement. As in the earlier examples, these songs are also often multipartite, but with different keys more clearly representing opposing ideas expressed in the sections, such as fantasy/light (C major) and reality/blindness (C minor) in "Como esperando abril" or seagull/life (E major) and death (C# minor) in "La gaviota." Whereas rapidly shifting harmonies represented volatile emotions in the love songs, they represent changes in perceptions in these songs, symbolizing shifting clouds in "Como esperando abril," shifting thoughts in "Mariposas," or the taking of life in "La gaviota."

Particularly skillful in songs such as "Mariposas" and "La gaviota," is the avoidance of an authentic cadence. In "La gaviota," the lack of authentic cadences lends an inconclusive sense to the song--save for the moment of death, which gets the only authentic cadence in the song. Similarly, in "Mariposas," the emerging of the butterflies from the dark is announced by an authentic cadence, while the rest of the song flutters from key to key. Earlier examples such as "Aunque no esté de moda" had also avoided authentic cadences, but these later songs show greater discipline in saving these authentic cadences for dramatic moments in the text. These later songs also share with "Aunque no esté de moda" (as well as "Debo partirme en dos") an ending on a chord other than the tonic; compared with the earlier examples, these later songs resolve more naturally by looping back to the beginning, rather than with power-chord endings, as in the earlier songs.

A harmonic feature that seems to have begun appearing more frequently during this period is the double-plagal cadence, a sequence of falling fourths. As discussed in the overview of Rodríguez's works, plagal cadences, either as a single IV-I or a double (VII-IV-I), are central to only a minority of Rodríguez's works.⁴⁶ While not

fixed on a single sentiment, double-plagal cadences in Rodríguez's oeuvre seem to occur to describe either non-actionable themes or never-ending, suspended situations, such as a memory ("Mariposas," "Hoy mi deber" (1979) at the thought of a lover), reincarnation ("Mariposas"), enchantment ("Mujeres" (1975)),⁴⁷ or a never-ending struggle ("Sueño con serpientes"). In addition, several songs that use single IV-I or V-IV-I cadences carry an air of fatalism, resignation, or weariness, such as "Y nada más" (1965), "Ese hombre," "Días y flores," "Me quieren" (1996), and "Cita con ángeles" (2003).

Rodríguez believes he picked up plagal progressions from music of the Cuban countryside (la música campesina) or Renaissance music.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, the more direct inspiration for the double-plagal may have been the Beatles, who used the double-plagal in "With a Little Help from My Friends" (Sergeant Pepper), "Here Comes the Sun," and "Polythene Pam" (Abbey Road), which are on albums particularly admired by Rodríguez:

Yo fui un gran admirador de los Beatles, sobre todo la época cuando me estaba formando como compositor. No me gustaron las primeras canciones de los Beatles. Ellos empezaron a gustarme desde *Rubber Soul*. Escuché *Revolver*, *Sgt. Pepper*, y *Abbey Road*—¡por favor, *Abbey Road*! Es una obra maestra. Y *Sgt. Pepper* también es muy sofisticado, en el arreglo de voz y las armonías (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁴⁹

In particular, he recalls with enthusiasm the VII-I and IV-I progressions in the first Beatles song he liked, "We Can Work It Out":

La primera canción que me encantaba fue "We Can Work It Out." Me gustaba cómo se pasa desde Do mayor a Si bemol y Fa, en vez de ir a Sol. [NB: La canción se toca en Re, pero la progresión armónica es I-bVII-I-IV-I] Me gustaba esa manera de manejar de tonalidades, de no hacer lo habitual. (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁵⁰

46 Specifically, plagal cadences (IV-I or V-IV-I) are central to 8% of songs in the sample, while double-plagal cadences (VII-IV-I) account for 3% of songs.

47 At "Pero lo que me ha estremecido./hasta perder casi el sentido/son tus ojitos divinos."

48 However, taking the songs of Garay and Vera as examples of vieja trova, the cadences are mostly of the V-I variety, and while there are falling fourth progressions, they rarely seem to happen in sequence; sequences of falling fifths are far more common (e.g. Garay's "La bayamesa," Vera's "Es mi venganza.") One example of a sequence of fourths is Garay's "Perla marina," but this sequence (Db-Ab-Bbm-F-Gb-Ebm) is not a double-plagal.

49 "I was a great admirer of the Beatles, especially during the time when I was taking shape as a composer. I didn't like the first songs of the Beatles. I started to like them from *Rubber Soul* onwards. I listened to *Revolver*, *Sergeant Pepper*, and *Abbey Road*—pu-lease, *Abbey Road*!. It's a masterpiece. And *Sgt. Pepper* is also very sophisticated, in its arrangement of voice and harmonies."

50 "The first song that I liked was "We Can Work It Out." I liked how it passes from C major to Bb and F, instead of going to G. [The song is in D, but the progression is I-bVII-I-IV-I] I liked this way of using keys, of not doing the well-worn progressions."

These plagal cadences appear in Rodríguez's songs from the 1990s with similar meanings, as will be discussed in the following section.

An outgrowth of Rodríguez's experience in ICAIC was the increased number of references to classical music in Rodríguez's songs after 1970, particularly in the orchestration and the nature of the introductions. Examples include the introduction on the piano to "Oh, melancolía" (1987), which quotes the beginning of the second movement of Beethoven's "Pathétique" piano sonata; the harpsichord in "Que ya viví, que te vas" (1976); the diminished chord sequences in the harp in "Rabo de nube" (1978); the strings in "Hay quién precisa" (1979); the chromatic piano accompaniment in "Mi lecho está tendido" (1982); and the a capella chorus of "Entre el espanto y la ternura" (1988). At times, the orchestration seems quite pictorial, as in the high strings and flutes floating overhead like clouds in "Como esperando abril," while the harmonies risng stepwise in "La gaviota" musically picture a seagull climbing into the air.

Along with this greater sophistication in the use of harmonies, cadences, and orchestration, Rodríguez's harmonic style appears to have become more conservative during this period. While chromatic or non-diatonic chords continue to appear in songs of the 1970s (and in fact, in expanded variety, as in the transition of "Como esperando abril" or in "Rabo de nube"), they generally seem to be used more sparingly or purposefully than in songs such as "Al final de este viaje" or "Aunque no esté de moda." While more polished, the later songs could be heard as lacking the exuberant sense of experimentation of the above-named earlier songs. Perhaps this streamlining was part of the natu-

ral process of refining a style, but one wonders if the weight of the academy inhibited him from experimentation. In an interview in *El Caiman burbudo* of Havana, Rodríguez said that he had at first resisted joining ICAIC because he feared that so much knowledge would lead him to lose his spontaneity (Gutiérrez 1999: 179-180). The techniques and theories may also have been initially intimidating; in the same interview, Pablo Milanés claimed that he was so traumatized by Brouwer's classes that he couldn't write songs for a year, which echoes Rodríguez's sense of feeling "useless," quoted previously. Gutiérrez has also remarked that Rodríguez's output fell off sharply during the 1970s (Gutiérrez 1999: 180).

Perhaps such observers would debate as to whether training led Rodríguez to a more skillful construction of songs but with a loss of urgency. Nonetheless, Rodríguez's own account perhaps summarizes best the integration of inspiration, training, and work in his creative process:

Yo no pienso mucho, yo te confieso. A veces, pienso. Pero no siempre. Y cuando estoy componiendo, primero actúo y después (pausa) pienso. Realmente yo no pienso, "ahora voy a hacer este diseño." Jamás, no. Yo nunca he hecho las canciones así. Con el grupo aprendí esas cosas, pero esas fueron cosas que uno aprende para olvidarlas. Y hay que olvidarlas por cierto, porque la música sería un desastre, lo que sale no es música. No se puede hacer música por libro. Se hace por...yo creo en la inspiración. Pero claro, también yo creo en el trabajo, porque después de la inspiración a veces en una canción hay un detalle, que en un momento en que encuentra que hay una sorpresa, un cambio, o esa sonoridad de que pronto aparece. Por eso entonces tiene que haber todo que está alrededor de cómo tu inserta eso dentro de una, y allí. Si, hay que trabajar, trabajar mucho (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁵¹

51 "I confess to you: I don't think much. Sometimes, I think. But not always. And when I'm composing, I first act, and then (pauses and sits back) I think. I don't really think, 'Now I'm going to do this pattern.' Never, no. I have never written songs that way. We learned those things in the Grupo Sonero, but those are things we learned in order to forget them. And one has to forget them for certain because the music would be a disaster – what would come out wouldn't be music. You can't write music by the book. You do it by. . . I believe in inspiration. But of course, I also believe in work, because after the inspiration sometimes a song has a detail, a moment where one finds a surprise, a change, a sound that quickly appears. Hence, one has to have everything that is around, to insert an idea here and there; yes, one has to work, one has to work hard."

Rodríguez in the 1990s

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 caused a severe economic crisis in Cuba, as subsidies and imports of oil, paper, iron ore, and other raw materials from its former trade partner dried up. Severe power and material shortages led to a plummeting of manufacturing output, halts in transport, and shortages in food and other necessities; such hardships led to tens of thousands of Cubans leaving by raft to Florida (University of Miami 2006). Under such duress during this "Special Period," the Cuban government legalized the use of the American dollar, opened the country to foreign tourists, and allowed self-employment in some fields. These changes brought about such social problems as a widening of differences in wealth among the population, as those with relatives outside of Cuba benefited from remittances, and an increase in prostitution catering toward tourists (de la Fuente 2001: 317-334).

For some musicians, the Special Period led to better opportunities. Not only did tourists provide a new market for some genres, but also the Cuban government became more open to performers' selling their recordings overseas, often through international music companies. The removal of penalties for owning foreign

currency in 1993 made it easier for musicians to keep more of their receipts from recording and touring overseas (Moore 2006: 168). While Rodríguez's albums had already been licensed and marketed internationally since the late 1970s, these changes in restrictions (as well as the reduced economic resources of Cubans) helped to tilt the composition of his overall fan base more in favor of Spain and other Latin American countries rather than the Cuban market. Accompanying this opening of the music market to foreigners—both tourists in Cuba and international fans—were song texts by a new generation of trova artists and timba players that more openly expressed individual opinions regarding Cuba's social problems (Moore 2006: 241-246).

In his 1990s triptych *Silvio* (1992), *Rodríguez* (1994), and *Domínguez* (1996) and the album of outtakes from those sessions, *Descartes* (1998), Rodríguez addresses many of the problems that grew out of the Special Period, such as prostitution ("Flores nocturnas" (1991)), the dollarized economy ("Paladar" (1996)),⁵² tourism ("La desilución" (1992)), and the difficulties in integrating capitalist aspects into a socialist framework ("Reino de todavía" (1994)).

"El necio" ("The Bull-Headed One," 1991), in *Silvio*

Verse: i=E minor

Em	A/E
i	IV
Para no hacer de mi icono pedazos,	
Ao/E	Em
vio	i
para salvarme entre únicos e impares,	
C	A7
VI	IV7
para cederme un lugar en su Parnaso,	
Bbo	Em
vio7/V	i
para darme un rincón en sus altares.	

Verse) Me vienen a convidar a arrepentirme,
me vienen a convidar a que no pierda,
mi vienen a convidar a indefinirme,
me vienen a convidar a tanta mierda.

Chorus: I=G (=III/Em) (0:38)

G	D	C
I	V	IV
Yo no sé lo que es el destino,		
G	D	C
I	V	IV
caminando fui lo que fui.		
G	D	C
I	V // G=VI/Em	
Allá Dios, ¿qué será divino?		
Em	D	C
i	VII	VI
! Yo me muero como viví, :/		
Em	D C	Bbo7+
i	VII VI	vio/V
Yo me muero como viví.		

Verse: i=Em (1:27)

Yo quiero seguir jugando a lo perdido,
yo quiero ser a la zurda más que diestro,
yo quiero hacer un congreso del unido,
yo quiero rezar a fondo un "hijo nuestro".

Verse) Dirán que pasó de moda la locura,
dirán que la gente es mala y no merece,
más yo seguiré soñando travesuras
(acaso multiplicar panes y peces).

(2:02)

Chorus) Yo no sé lo que es el destino, caminando fui lo que fui. Allá Dios, ¿qué será divino?	Em	D C	Bbo7+
	i	VII VI	vio/V
Yo me muero como viví.			

Tag: i=Em

Tag) Yo me muero como viví,		
C	A	G/E-F#/E-F/E
VI	IV	III-II-bII
como viví :/		
Em		
i		
Yo me muero como viví.		

Verse) Dicen que me arrastrarán por sobre rocas
cuando la Revolución se venga abajo,
que machacarán mis manos y mi boca,
que me arrancarán los ojos y el badajo.

Verse) Será que la necedad parió conmigo,
la necedad de lo que hoy resulta necio:
la necedad de asumir al enemigo,
la necedad de vivir sin tener precio.

Chorus) Yo no sé lo que es el destino,
caminando fui lo que fui.
Allá Dios, ¿qué será divino?
Yo me muero como viví.

In order not to shatter my icons

In order to save me among unique ones and odd ones

In order to hand me over a place in his Parnassus,

In order to give me a corner in his altars.

They are coming to invite me to repent,
They are coming to offer not to lose,
They are coming to offer not to determine me,
They are coming to offer me such shit.

I don't know what is destiny,

I was proceeding as I was.

Oh, God, what is really divine?

I will die as I have lived.

I want to continue playing at what is lost,
I want to be left-handed rather than right,
I want to make a united congress,
I want to pray from the bottom of my heart for "Our Son"
(rather than "Our Father").
They will say that folly has gone out of fashion,
They will say that the people are bad and undeserving,
I continue to dream of pranks
Perhaps multiply bread and fish.

I don't know what is destiny,
I was proceeding as I was.
Oh, God, what is really divine?

I will die as I have lived.

They say that they will drag me over the rocks
when the Revolution falls apart,
that they will crush my hands and my mouth
that they will pull out my eyes and penis.

Perhaps bull-headedness gave birth to me
the bull-headedness that today has turned out to be bull-headed:
the bull-headedness of taking on an enemy
the bull-headedness of living without having a price

I don't know what is destiny,
I was proceeding as I was.
Oh, God, what is really divine?
I will die as I have lived.

In this song, Rodríguez reaffirms his faith in the Revolution, with anger toward those who would break it down. As he told *Juventud Rebelde*:

[La cólera que provoca el nacimiento de "El necio" fue a] ver el camino que está tomando el mundo, saber que estamos en un momento de definiciones. Para muchos no es ningún secreto el triunfalismo con que Estados Unidos emprende su campaña muy fuerte contra Cuba. Hay muchos que ven venir la agresión a nosotros. Van a tratar de desestabilizar el país o de provocarnos. Y hay que morir por la Patria. No hay alternativas (Díaz Pérez 1995: 274).⁵³

In a more recent interview, he explained that while he had been thinking of the breakdown of communism in the Soviet Union as a potential subject for a song, it was a personal attack on him at the Miami airport that served as its final catalyst:

Cuando escribí "El necio," estaba pensando en Fidel y, hasta cierto punto, en mí. . . Lo que me llevó a escribirla fue el ambiente ideológico de finales de los 80, principios de los 90, el derrumbe del campo socialista. Ya estaba la glasnost en la Unión Soviética y se veía que aquello apuntaba hacia algo catastrófico. . .

[Este idea] se me unió con una experiencia que había tenido, con un tránsito una vez por Miami yendo hacia Puerto Rico... Me rompieron una guitarra. Fueron cubanos que trabajaban en el aeropuerto quienes le saltaron encima. Culpa mía creo yo, porque tenía una pegatina de Fidel y una bandera cubana, y no me dio la gana de quitarlas. Digamos que me lo busqué. Cuando llegué a Puerto Rico, escuché en la radio un programa desde Miami donde decían que la contrarrevolución estaba muy decaída porque habían pasado los revolucionarios 'fulano' y 'mengano', entre ellos yo, por Miami y en otra época nos hubieran arrastrado, hubieran limpiado las calles con nosotros. . .

Ex. 14A—"El necio," Verse

Em i A/E IV64
Pa ra no ha - cer de mi i - co - no pe - da - zos
[In order not to shatter my icons

AoE viio Em i
pa - ra sal - var me en - tre ú - ni - cos e im - pa - res —
In order to save me among unique one and odd ones

C VI A7 IV7
pa - ra ce - der - me lu - gar en su Par - na - so
In order to hand me over a place in their Parnassus

Bbo7 viio7/V Em i
pa - ra dar me un rin - con - ci - to en sus al - ta - res —
In order to give me a corner in their altars]

54 "When I wrote 'El necio,' I was thinking of Fidel, and to a certain point, me. What brought me to write it was the ideological environment of the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and the collapse of socialism. The Soviet Union was under glasnost and one could see that it pointed to something catastrophic.

"[The idea] came together with an experience I had had during a transit stop one time in Miami going toward Puerto Rico. They broke my guitar. Cuban exiles working at the airport threw it. I thought it was my fault, as the case had had a Fidel sticker and a Cuban flag, and I hadn't wanted to take them off. Let's say I was looking for it. When I arrived in Puerto Rico, I heard a Miami radio program that said that the counterrevolution was deteriorating because some revolutionaries—so-and-so and what's-his-name, including myself—had passed through Miami and that in another time, they would have arrested us and cleaned the streets with us.

"I had never before suffered such a public threat of that scope. It had an impact on me. It didn't jell immediately and was like a pending subject. And it seemed that for those aspects of the human mind, the fall of the Soviet Union and what it was approaching, and the Miami incident united to create the chemistry necessary to create 'El necio.'

"For this reason I say 'dicen que me arrastrarán por sobre rocas, cuando la revolución se venga abajo...', 'In a way, I was telling the story of the decline in the revolution in the Soviet Union and what it augured for ours.'"

En mis huesos, en mi carne, nunca había sufrido una amenaza pública de esa envergadura. . . Eso me marcó. No logró cuajar en aquel momento y fue como una asignatura pendiente. Y parece que por esos artilugios de la mente humana, el derrumbe de la Unión Soviética y lo que se avecinaba, más lo de Miami, se unió y creó la química necesaria para hacer "El necio."

Por eso es que 'dicen que me arrastrarán por sobre rocas, cuando la revolución se venga abajo...', 'De alguna forma, yo conté esa revolución que se estaba yendo abajo en la Unión Soviética y los augurios de la nuestra (Rodríguez Derivet 2005).⁵⁴

The song became a symbol of Cuban resistance against imperialism when it was taken up as an anthem by the five suspected Cuban terrorists who were jailed in Miami from the mid-1990s. In the verses, Rodríguez recognizes that the Communist system, as had been known, is lost ("a necedad de vivir sin tener precio"). He is threatened by unnamed people to change ("Me vienen a convidar a arrepentirme," "Dirán que pasó de moda la locura," "Dicen que me arrastrarán por sobre rocas"). Nonetheless, he refuses to change ("Yo quiero seguir jugando a lo perdido").

Harmonically, the verse (Ex. 14A) is quite static. The opening eight measures have a bass pedal on E, starting with the tonic in E minor and circling via A major (IV, in lieu of A minor); a Bb diminished chord serves as the cadential chord, resolving by two common tones E and G to the tonic. Similarly, the melody is monotone, recalling the verse of "La era está pariendo un corazón" described earlier. The rapidly repeated notes – the dodecasyllabled text is condensed into just over two measures--are reminiscent of the patter of a fool muttering to himself, like patter dialogue in *opera buffa*. Hence, the verse is a musical picture of resignation--harmonically, melodically, and dynamically.

In contrast, the chorus (Ex. 14B), where the songwriter declares that he cannot predict destiny, has the tone of a defiant anthem. Set in G major, with longer notes and arpeggios in the melody and a shorter, nonasyllabled text, it invites the audience to sing along. The harmony repeats the progression of G (I) – D (V) – C (IV) with each declaration, reaching its peak in melodic pitch at "que será divino." At that point, the pessimism of the verses returns – rather than resolving to G major, the harmony moves back to E minor on "Yo me muero como viví." The chorus leads back to the verse in E minor, but without an authentic cadence, as the diminished Bb chord substitutes for the dominant.

Ex. 14B, "El necio," Chorus

Yo no sé lo que es el des - ti - no
[I don't know what is destiny,
ca - mi - nan - do fui lo que fui
I was proceeding as I was.
A - llá Dios, que se - rá di - vi - no
Oh, God, what is really divine?
yo me mue - ro co - mo vi - vi
I will die as I have lived.]

"Reino de todavía" ("Still the Kingdom," 1994), in *Domínguez***Verse) I=A mixolydian** (0:09)

A

I

Viene girando un ángulo planetario,

Em

v

golpeando las paredes del infinito,

G

D

VII

IV

descascarando el nácar del inventario,

A

I

violentando el remanso de lo prescrito.

Em-G-A

v-VII-I

Verse) Ciertas presiones altas vienen girando,
en los celajes arremolinaciones,
travesuras del tiempo traspapelando:
vienen antecedentes de los ciclones.

Verse) Lloran viejos obscenos, moralizantes,
almas crucificadas en los cincuenta,
con las lenguas sumidas en anhelantes
saliveos al sexo de los noventa.

Verse) Lloran niños dormidos, bien arropados
en la eterna ilusión de salir mejores,
pero nadie se salva del pie forzado:
hay que crecer bailando con sinsabores.

Chorus: I=A mixolydian

G

D/F#

G-A

VII

IV

VII-I

Balseros, navidades, absolutismo,

G

D/F#

G-A

VII

IV

VII-I

bautismos, testimonios, odio y ternura.

Em

F#m

G

F#m

A

v

vi

VII

vi

I

Nadie sabe qué cosa es el comunismo

Em

F#m

G

F#m

A

v

vi

VII

vi

I

y eso puede ser pasto de la censura.

Em

F#m

G

F#m

A

v

vi

VII

vi

I

Nadie sabe qué cosa es el comunismo

Em

F#m

G

F#m

A

v

vi

VII

vi

I

y eso puede ser pasto de la ventura.

(Em-G-A9-G-Em-A9)

Verse) De entre todo lo triste y lo perdido
se aproximan girando las estrellitas.
Nadie las ve avanzando por sobre el ruido
de las tiendas legales y las proscritas.

Verse) El sistema invisible tendrá su precio,
su frontera y tamaño, su analogía.
Dios le llaman algunos, otros Comercio,
mas para mí es el Reino de Todavía.
(G-Em-A9)

Chorus) Balseros, navidades, absolutismo (...)
(Em-G-A9-G-Em-A9)

He comes, turning a planetary angle,

Banging at the walls of infinity,

shelling the mother-of-pearl of the inventory,

violating the pool of the prescribed.

Certain pressures from on high are turning,
in the sunset clouds (omens), there are whirls,
mischiefs of a misplaced time
the forerunners of hurricanes are arriving.

The old, obscene men are crying, moralizing,
souls crucified in the 1950s,
with their tongues immersed in yearning,
salivating over the sex of the 1990s.

Sleeping children are crying, well covered
in the eternal illusion of having a better life,
but no one rescues them from a forced path (fixed rhyme):
one has to grow up dancing with displeasure.

Rafters, Christmases, absolutism,

baptisms, testimonies, hate, and tenderness.

No one knows what Communism really is,

and that could be the fodder for censorship.

No one knows what Communism really is,

and that could be the basis for fortune.

Between all that is sad and all that has been lost,
they come near, turning around the stars.
No one sees them advancing over the noise
of the legal and illegal stores.

The invisible hand will have its price,
its borders and size, its analogies.
God will call for some, Commerce others,
but for me, it is the Kingdom That Still Reigns.

Rafters, Christmases, absolutism,

This song refers to the difficulties of a collective society adjusting to the advance of capitalism and the threat posed by capitalism and the United States. The verses portend profound change ("Ciertas presiones altas vienen girando,/ en los celajes arremolinaciones"), perhaps even a cataclysmic one ("vienen antecedentes de los ciclones"). An unnamed or symbolic individual appears engaged in corruption ("Viene girando un ángulo planetario, . . ./descascarando el nácar del inventario,/violentando el remanso de lo prescrito"). Meanwhile, the capitalists ("El sistema invisible"), as symbolized by the stars of the American flag, are advancing ("se aproximan girando las estrellitas"), as evidenced by increased mercantilism ("Nadie las ve avanzando por sobre el ruido/ de las tiendas legales y las proscritas").

The harmonies of the verse (Ex. 15A), in A mixolydian, circle through a series of falling fourths: first from A (I) to E minor (v), punctuating the rhyme at the end of the second line. The double-plagal progression G (VII)-D (IV)-A (I) follows to take up the next two lines of verse. These circular, slow-moving progressions lend a static air to the verse. The melody, too, is static; as shown in the Schenker graph (Ex. 15B) it is centered on C#, traces the harmony in parallel fifths, and returns to C#. It is only in the instrumental tag, which leads from E minor to A major (v-VII-I), that the guitar finally resolves the C# down to A. Hence, both melody and harmony exhibit circular, static qualities, which seem in keeping with the fatalistic and pessimistic tone of the text.

Ex. 15A, "Reino de todavía", Verse

Ex. 15B, "Reino de todavía," verse, Schenker graph

Given the changes in society noted in the verse, the chorus declares that no one knows what communism—that sacred cow—is anymore, leaving it vulnerable to arbitrary policies such as censorship or corruption. Harmonically, both of the first two couplets are an elaboration of the VII-I rock cadence, with the first having IV as a neighbor chord and the second progressing from v to VII, with a final neighbor chord in vi. With each line ending in the tonic, the harmonies have a static, circular quality that fits the repeating, circular quality of the text. Hence, just as the text alludes to capitalists, the United States, and unnamed others turning the stars around Cuba, the circularity of the harmonies and melody seem to suggest a nation suspended in mid-air, waiting for a bigger force to turn it.

"Flores nocturnas" ("Flowers of the Night," 1991), in *Rodríguez*

Intro: A·A/C#·D9·D9/F#

Verse: I=A mixolydian (00:16)

A	A/C#	D	D/F#	A·A/C#·D9·D9/F#
I	I6	IV	IV6	I

Se abren las flores nocturnas de Quinta Avenida

The flowers of the night on Fifth Avenue open

A	A/C#	D	D/F#	G	E
I	I6	IV	IV6	VII	V

Para esos pobres señores que van al hotel.

For those poor gentlemen who go to the hotel.

Bm	G
ii	VII

Flores que rompen en la oscuridad,

Flowers that break in the dark,

Bm	Bb
ii	biI

Flores de guiños de complicidad

Flowers of winks of complicity,

D/F#	E
IV6	V

Flores silbando suicidios,

Flowers whistling suicides,

G	G#o	D/F#	F	E	A (PAC)
VII	#vii	IV6	biI/V	V	I

Flores de aroma fatal

Flowers of an unavoidable fragrance.

Verse) ¿Qué jardinero ha sembrado la Quinta Avenida
con variedad tan precisa de nocturnidad?What gardener has planted Fifth Avenue
with a variety so specifically nocturnal?

¿Cuál es su especie y cuál su país?

What is its species and what is its origin?

¿Qué fino abono nutrió su raíz,

What fine fertilizer (payment) nourished its roots,

dándoles tono silvestre

giving it a wild shade

dónde estará su matriz?

where its womb will be?

(A·A/C#·D9·D9/F#)

B: I=A (1:33)

E/G#	D/F#	A
V6	IV6	I

Flores que cruzan las puertas prohibidas,

Flowers that cross prohibited doors,

A/C#	B/D#	G#m
I6	V6/V	iii/V

Flores que saben lo que no sabré,

Flowers that know what I will not know,

Bm	E
ii	V

Flores que ensartan su sueño de vida

Flowers that string their dream of life

A (IAC)

I

En guiraldas sin fe.

in garlands without faith.

A	A/C#	D9	D9/F#	A	A/C#
I		IV		I	

Flores de sábanas con ojos,

Flowers of sheets with eyes,

D9	D9/F#	A
IV	I	

Flores desechables,

Disposable flowers,

A/C#	D9	D9/F#	A	A/C#
I	IV	IV	I	

Campanillas del antojo,

Small bells of whim,

B7/D#	D	E	A (PAC)
II#653	IV	V	I

Flores comiendo sobras del amor.

Flowers eating leftovers of love.

Verse) Brotan, rebotan, explotan por Quinta Avenida.

They sprout, rebound, and exploit on Fifth Avenue.

Son arrancadas y parten con aire veloz.

They are plucked and cut with a fast air.

Dicen que es duro el oficio de flor

They say the flower trade is difficult

cuando sus pétalos se ajan al sol.

When its petals wear out in the sun.

Pálidas flores nocturnas,

Pale night flowers,

flores de la decepción.

Flowers of deception.

Chorus) Flores que cruzan las puertas ...

Flowers that cross the doors

... comiendo sobras del amor.

eating leftovers of love.

This song refers to the growth in prostitution that accompanied Cuba's economic problems and aggressive pursuit of tourism following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Using the literary metaphor of nocturnal flowers for the prostitutes, Rodríguez refrains from judging the women themselves but expresses sympathy for their potential difficulties ("Flores que saben lo que no sabré," "Dicen que es duro el oficio de flor/Cuando sus pétalos se ajan al sol"). He also raises questions as to why so many women have taken this route ("¿Qué jardinero ha sembrado la Quinta Avenida/ Con variedad tan precisa de nocturnidad?/. . . ¿Qué fino abono nutrió su raíz?").

The verse (Ex. 16A), in A mixolydian, begins in an alternation of I-IV that is interrupted by a turn to the G (VII), emphasizing the last word in "Para esos pobres señores que van al hotel." A turn to B minor (ii) delivers the most sympathetic and questioning lines of the verses ("Flores que rompen en la oscuridad,/Flores de guiños de complicidad," "Dicen que es duro el oficio de flor/Cuando sus pétalos se ajan al sol"). A Neapolitan Bb major chord acts as a pivot back to D and, in turn, A major. As a final surprise in the verse, an F major chord (Neapolitan bII/V) is inserted before the perfect authentic cadence back to A major. Both the Bb and F, which do not occur in A mixolydian, are passing chords approached by common tone changes, coloring the words "complicidad" and "fatal."

Ex. 16A—"Flores nocturnas," Voice leading in verse

A mixolydian



The chorus contains two sets of four-line phrases ("Flores que cruzan las puertas prohibidas" and "Flores de sábanas con ojos"). In the first phrase, a deceptive cadence to G# minor (iii/V) emphasizes the word "sabré" ("Flores que saben lo que no sabré"), while "Flores que ensartan su sueño de vida/en guirnaldas sin fe" is punctuated with an imperfect authentic cadence. The first three lines of the next phrase are similar descriptions of the prostitutes and are set in the A major-D major alternation of the beginning of the verse; this phrase, too, ends with a perfect authentic cadence at "Flores comiendo sobras del amor."

Hence, Rodríguez uses deceptive cadences to minor keys and common tone shifts to chords outside of the scale to color key phrases in this song, without ever straying too far from the tonic. They are momentary diversions, just as the prostitutes are to their customers. As if to drive home the point, the song's key and lilting 6/8 render it reminiscent of a folk dance, making it as deceptively cheerful as the subjects themselves.

"Abracadabra" (1992), in *Silvio*

Intro: C-Eb

Verse: I=C Dorian (0:06)

C	Eb	
I	bIII	
Una mu-	jer	
C		Eb
I		bIII
por despecho -o por placer-		
Eb D	Ab	
bIII II#	bVI	
enterró en un jardín		
Ab	F G	C (PAC) Eb
bVI	IV V	I bIII
un coco seco mojado en carmín.		

A woman,

for spite, or for pleasure,

buried in a garden

a dry coconut covered in carmine.

A) Luego un rival,
narcotraficando el mal,
escupía con ron
y alfileraba un feliz corazón. C (PAC)

Later a rival,
trafficking in evil,
who spit with rum
and stuck pins into a happy heart.

Pre-chorus: I=C mixolydian 0:42

C	Eb	
I	bIII	
Yo no sé		
Bb	F	C Eb
bVII	IV	I bIII
cómo hay quien malversa la vida		
Bb	F	C Eb
bVII	IV	I bIII
cómo hay quien invoca una herida,		
Bb	F C	Eb F G
bVII	IV I	bIII IV V
como pueden gastar el amor.		

I don't know

how there can be those who steal life,

how there can be those who invoke a wound,

as they can squander love.

C (PAC)

Pre-chorus) Yo no sé (1:07)

(Como si nos faltaran cadenas;
como si nos sobraran las cenas
como si diera dicha el dolor.)

I don't know

(As if we didn't have enough chains;
as if we had an excess of suppers,
as if pain could bring happiness.)

Chorus: I=C major (1:30)

C (IAC)

I		
Yo no sé		
F7+	C	F
IV	I	IV
si el mal tiempo trae mala fe;		
F	Am	G
IV	vi	V
si la desesperación hace blanco		
F	Em	Dm (d-c#-c)
IV	iii	ii
y se cierran los laicos colegios;		
Dm	Am Am/G	
ii	vi	

I don't know

if bad times bring ill will;

if desperation hits the mark

and they shut lay associations;

si se vuelve al sortilegio

F **C**
IV I

y aprendices de delfín

Em **Bb** **F-G**
iii bVII IV-V

creen llegar a Merlín.

Chorus: I=C Major (2:13)

C (IAC) **Eb**
I bIII

Yo no sé

F **G** **C (IAC)** **Eb**
IV V I bIII

si el mal tiempo trae mala fe,

F **G** **Am** **G**
IV V vi V

pero a mí lo que me embruja es volar

F **Em** **Dm (d-c#-c-b)**
IV iii ii

y hechizarme con tus sortilegios:

Dm **Am** **Am/G**
ii vi vi

soy brillante en tu colegio;

F **C/E**
IV I^o

subo nota en el amor,

Em **Bb** **F-G**
iii bVII IV-V

vuelo allí, como al sol

C (PAC)
I

un colibrí.

Verse) Abracadabra,
curandera mi palabra,
todo mal pone bien,
sana del odio y vacuna también.

Abracadabra,
siga la pata en su cabra,
girasol, alelí,

F **G** **C** **Eb**
IV V I bIII

la mariposa besó al colibrí.

C **Eb** **D-Ab-**
I bIII II-bVI

al colibrí,

G **C-Eb-D-Ab** **G**
V I-bIII-II-bVI V

al colibrí

F **C**
IV I

al colibrí.

if one returns to sorcery

and apprentices of the heir apparent

believe they are becoming King Arthur's Merlin.

I don't know

if bad times bring ill will;

but to me, what bewitches me is to fly

and charm myself with your spells:

I am brilliant in your school,

I raise my grades in love,

I fly there, like a hummingbird

to the sun.

Abracadabra,
witch doctor, my word,
all ills heal,
cured of hate and vaccinated as well
Abracadabra,
the paw continues in its goat,
sunflower, wallflower,

the butterfly kissed the hummingbird.

the hummingbird,

the hummingbird,

the hummingbird,

Afro-Cuban religions such as santería have weathered a long history of persecution and repression, with practitioners having suffered police raids, arrests, and unsubstantiated accusations into the twentieth century. Even after the Revolution, practitioners continued to suffer harassment and vandalism, while government publications continued to characterize it as backward and pathological into the 1970s (Moore 2006: 209-211). Attitudes toward the African heritage in Cuban culture, including Afro-Cuban religions, began to soften during the 1970s and 1980s following Cuba's involvement in the Angolan War. In the Special Period, all religions, but especially Afro-Cuban ones, saw a boom as state policies toward religion were further relaxed, while many people turned to religion during difficult times (Moore 2006: 219-20, de la Fuente 2001: 333-4).

"Abracadabra" could be interpreted as an outgrowth of this boom in religious practices during this time of increasing desperation; more explicitly, Rodríguez intended it to be a critique of the use of beliefs and powers to inflict harm on others. As he writes humorously in the introduction to the song,

Hace unos meses vinieron a casa unos amigos y me alertaron sobre todo tipo de hechizos siniestros que amenazaban cada rincón de mi existencia. Ante tal peligro no tuve otro recurso que elaborar este sortilegio de resguardo.⁵⁵

The opening verse describes two rivals attempting to hurt each other, one burying a coconut covered in carmine, while another sticks pins into a heart (Ex. 17A). While this verse has a melody that is best described as C dorian, its harmonies rock back and forth between those belonging to C major and Eb major, the relative major to C minor. In the orbit of C major are the harmonies of F, G, and by modal mixture, D; in the Schenker diagram (Fig. 17B), these harmonies are shown with the note stem on the soprano line pointing up and that of the bass line pointing down, and with the note stem pointing upwards in the "chords" section to the right of the diagram.

Ex. 17A – "Abracadabra," Verse

Ex. 17A shows the musical notation for the verse of "Abracadabra." The melody is written on a single staff in C major/Eb major (one flat). The lyrics are: "U - na mu - jer por des - pe - cho, o por pla - cer en - te - rró, en un jar - dín un co-co se - co mo - ja-do en car-min buried in a garden, a dry coconut covered in carmine." Above the melody, Roman numerals indicate the harmonies: C I, Eb bIII, C I, Eb bIII, D II#, Ab bVI, F IV, G V, and C I (PAC).

Ex. 17B- "Abracadabra," Verse, Schenker diagram

Ex. 17B is a Schenker diagram for the verse of "Abracadabra." It shows the melody on a single staff and the bass line on a grand staff. The melody is labeled "Verse" and the bass line is labeled "CHORDS." The diagram illustrates the harmonic structure, showing the progression of chords and the relationship between the melody and the bass line. The chords are labeled: C Dorian I, bIII, I, bIII, II, bVI, IV, V, I. The bass line is labeled: I, II, bIII, IV, V, bVI, bVII, I C maj, I C min.

In the orbit of Eb major is Ab major; these harmonies are shown with the stem pointing upwards in the bass. The melody on the Eb-Ab axis coincidentally falls on the lower end of Rodríguez's range and is shown on the alto line on this graph, with the stem pointing down. The constant shifting between these two orbits provides an unstable feeling that is exaggerated in the second half of the verse, in the tritone shift in the bass from D to Ab. The use of Eb and Ab (rather than, say, Em and Am) transform what would have been a conventional I-ii-vi-IV-V-I progression

⁵⁵ "A few months ago, some friends came to my house and alerted me about all the types of sinister spells that threatened every corner of my existence. Before such danger, I had no other recourse but to produce this spell of protection."

to a confusing juxtaposition of major and minor—the harmonic equivalent of dizziness under a spell. The melody, too, floats; it is essentially circular, starting on C and returning to C for the cadence, while the alto-line melody circles around G.

Rodríguez's own views are expressed in the pre-chorus and chorus sections. In the pre-chorus, he makes critical comments on those who are willing to use such means to invoke harm on others ("Yo no sé/cómo hay quien mal-versa la vida/ cómo hay quien invoca una herida"), particularly given difficult times ("como si nos sobraran las cenas"). The melody here is in mixolydian rather than dorian, as E natural is now in the melody; the Eb chord, retained from the opening, is incorporated into a series of plagals that resolve to the tonic.

Ex. 17C—"Abracadabra," Chorus

Yo no sé / I don't know / si el mal tiem - po tra - e / if bad times bring

ma - la fe / ill will / si la de - ses - pe - ra - / if desperation

ción ha - ce blan - co y se cie - rran los lai - cos co - / hits the mark and they shut lay associations;

le - gios / if se vuel - ve al sor - ti - / one returns to sorcery

le - gi - io / y a - pren - di - ces de del - / and apprentices of the heir apparent

fin creen lle - gar a Mer - / believe they are becoming

King Arthur's Merlin.

un co - li - bri. / a hummingbird.]

Rodríguez takes a more sympathetic stance in the chorus (Ex. 17C), where he acknowledges that bad times and desperation may be contributing to reliance on such beliefs ("Yo no sé/ si el mal tiempo trae mala fe"); in the

second iteration of the chorus, he seems to be charming the sorceress out of ill spells. This chorus is unambiguously in C major (except for the Bb, which leads into the subdominant preparing the final cadence), and this clarity of tonality, underlining his views, provides a contrast against the shifting harmonies describing the magical powers.

Similarly, the contour of the melodies in the verse vs. the chorus enhances this musical depiction of magic vs. reality. While the melody in the verse undulates, that of the chorus contains several runs up the scale (Fig. 14C, mm.7-9, 19-21) and down it (mm.9-13, 29-30), leaving no ambiguity as to the tonal center. From these notes, one could construct an *Urlinie*⁵⁶ with a 5-1 descent—a contrast with the circular melody of the verse (Ex. 17D). Furthermore, this *Urlinie* is supported by a V-I cadence, confirming this tonal clarity. Hence, Rodríguez uses two musical metaphors to contrast superstition against his views: harmonic and melodic clarity.

Ex. 17D—"Abracadabra," Chorus, Schenker diagram

That is, except for a little twist. A Bb (bVII) prepares the final cadence by leading into V (G) via IV (F). While bVII before a cadence is not unusual in Rodríguez's music (or rock), the chord does come as a surprise after a long passage unambiguously in C major. The tritone move in the bass (E-Bb) recalls the tritone (D-Ab) in the verse. Not all the spells are shaken, and the song ends on a recapitulation of the verse.

⁵⁶ In Schenkerian analysis, the conceptual reduction of the principal melodic voice, descending from the fifth or third scale degree to the first.

Summary: songs of the 1990s

Rodríguez's songs in the 1990s from the Special Period show a return to texts that comment on Cuba's internal crises—a contrast from his political songs of the 1980s, which were often directed at American imperialism.⁵⁷ Musically, however, these songs largely show a continuation and refinement of patterns already established in earlier periods. With a repeated-tone melody in the verse and a leaping melody in the chorus, the structure of "El necio" is reminiscent of "La era está pariendo un corazón"; both songs express feelings of sadness and defiance. Repeated harmonic patterns are used to convey a single idea in anthem-like style, as with the chorus of "El necio," which recalls "Días y flores." Common-tone progressions highlight words in "Flores nocturnas" as in "Mariposas"; both songs involve fleeting situations.

Particularly interesting is the use of harmonies in "Abracadabra." The modal ambiguity of the verse provides an apt depiction of sorcery, particularly when contrasted against the tonal clarity used to frame Rodríguez's view in the chorus. In this way, "Abracadabra" reflects a similar device as "Al final de este viaje," where tonal clarity also serves as a metaphor for mental or spiritual clarity. In addition, "Abracadabra" demonstrates how Rodríguez uses modal ambiguity to depict magic or uncertain situations, with its conflict between sharp harmonies centered on C major and flat harmonies centered on C minor in the verse.

A similar pattern occurs in "La primera mentira" (1969), an allegory set in an enchanted forest. The chords of the verse are E-C#-Eb-C-A-G#m-F#m-B-E or I-VI#-bI-bVI-IV-iii-ii-V-I; what might have been a standard I-vi-IV-ii-V-I progression is altered by the insertion of the unrelated harmonies Eb (bI) and C (bVI), creating a juxtaposition of sharp harmonies with flat har-

monies as heard in "Abracadabra." Similarly, the opening progression of "Trova de Edgardo" (1992), dedicated to Edgar Allan Poe, is C-Ab-F-Bb-G-C, with the melody in parallel major thirds to the bass; what might have been a standard I-IV-V-I progression is made jarring by two flat harmonies, Ab (bVI) and Bb (bVII). Rodríguez recognized the similarities and explained:

("La primera mentira" y "Abracadabra") hablan de cosas ambiguas y especulativas. "Abracadabra" habla del mal uso de la creencia y del poder para hacer daño. Pero eso debe ser el contrario. Si tiene un poder, si tiene un Dios, o si tiene un don que da la naturaleza, tiene que usarlo para hacer bien, no para hacer mal. Y "La primera mentira" habla de que todos, los que quieren ser buenos y los que son malos, que todas tienen frustraciones. Las dos canciones tienen algo que ver, porque hablan de los desvalidos de lo que es ser humano. Y quizás por eso sea tan insegura la tonalidad, como que no se sabe dónde están las cosas, o dónde estamos. Y encontré esas formas de expresar musicalmente y lo hice. Es probablemente uno de los casos donde me ocurría la música primero, y la música me ha sugerido la temática. La ambigüedad me ha sugerido lo que tiene que decir el texto.⁵⁸

While Rodríguez's songs of the 1990s show continuity in the use of harmonic patterns, they nonetheless reflect a shift in the style in which they are set. After releasing orchestrated versions of his songs in *Rabo de nube* (1980), *Unicornio* (1982), *Tríptico* (1984), *Causas y azares* (1986), and *Oh, melancolía* (1988), Rodríguez returned to a simple guitar accompaniment in his 1990s quadriptych.⁵⁹ Perhaps in keeping with this return to simplicity, these albums also include songs set in the style of traditional Cuban genres, such as "Trova de Edgardo," "Rosana" (1997, son), and "Paladar" (1996, bolero). While Rodríguez had referenced Cuban

57 Songs from the late 1970s through the 1980s commenting on imperialism and solidarity among Latin American countries include "Me acosa el carapáida" (1979), "Canción urgente para Nicaragua" (1980), "Por quién merece amor" (1981), "El tiempo está a favor de los pequeños" (1982), "Sueño de una noche de verano" (1984), and "La Resurrección" (1988).

58 ("La primera mentira" and 'Abracadabra') are about ambiguous and speculative things. 'Abracadabra' is about the misuse of beliefs and power to do harm. It should be the opposite. If one has power, a God, or a Don that gives a disposition, one should use it to do good, not evil. And 'La primera mentira' is about how everyone – including those that want to be good as well as those that are bad – has frustrations. The two songs have something in common, because they are about the helplessness of being human. And perhaps for this reason, the tonality is so uncertain, as if one didn't know where things were, where we were. And I found those forms to express them musically and did it that way. It's probably one of those cases where the music occurred to me first, and the music suggested the thematic. The ambiguity suggested to me what the text had to say."

59 Among his later albums, *Mariposas* (1999), is acoustic, featuring the guitarist Rey Guerra; *Expedición* (2002) uses orchestration; *Cita con ángeles* (2003) is acoustic; and *Érase que se era* (2006) features acoustic guitar, percussion, woodwinds, backup vocals, and some strings.

genres in earlier decades (e.g. "Causas y azares" (1986, timba), the setting in traditional genres in acoustic instruments lends "Paladar" and "Rosana," which refer to contemporary problems in Cuba, a touch of wistful

nostalgia.⁶⁰ Conversely, references to rock, as was common in Rodríguez's earlier songs ("Fusil contra fusil," "Debo partirme en dos"), are relatively few during this period, with "El necio" being one of the few examples.⁶¹

Musical metaphor in Rodríguez's songs

Table 2 provides a summary of musical devices Rodríguez has used in the preceding examples. Often these devices are used in pairs with a contrasting one, adding to their meaning. The resigned monotone melodies of the verses of "La era está pariendo un corazón" or "El necio" are contrasted against their anthem-like choruses. The opinions of different parties are set in different harmonies, such as dominant vs. tonic in "Ese hombre." The rapidly shifting harmonies in the verse of "Ojalá," projecting a range of memories, are set against the repeated authentic cadences of the chorus, stating the singer's resolve to forget. Similarly, tonal ambiguity in "Abracadabra" pits the misuse of sorcery against clear-headedness. Such contrasts are often highlighted by a multipartite structure, with the sections in different keys, as in "Debo partirme en dos." On the other hand, monothematic songs often have strophic settings, such as "Resumen de noticias," "Unicornio" (1981), or "Cita con ángeles" (2003).

Particularly interesting is Rodríguez's use of different types of cadences. In the above-mentioned "Ojalá" and "Abracadabra," as well as "Al final de este viaje," authentic cadences underline the notion of resolve or clear-headedness. In other songs, a sparse use of authentic cadences serves to spotlight dramatic moments in the text, such as the appearance of butterflies in "Mariposas" or the moment of death in "La gaviota." There also seems to be a differentiation in the use of plagal or double-plagal cadences relative to

authentic cadences; as previously discussed, with plagal cadences used in songs with a certain pessimism and double-plagal cadences used to set never-ending, cyclic situations.

Moreover, Rodríguez's use of these patterns has been consistent throughout his career, including the period before he received training at ICAIC. Given this consistency, it is interesting to compare songs with remarkably similar patterns. As discussed previously, Rodríguez consciously uses simple, repeating progressions when he wants to convey a message; within this format, the similarity between "Resumen de noticias" (1970) and "Testamento" (1975) is striking, as both are open progressions starting with I and ending in V, cycling through V, vi, and ii in the interim. Rodríguez's position with the government could not have been more different between the two – the former was written in defiance of censure on the *Oceano Pacífico*, while the latter was written to sing to Cuban soldiers stationed in the Angolan War. Nonetheless, he may have harbored the same feelings in both cases--of having an extensive message to convey, with urgency, while in transit (in "Resumen," he was on his return home; in "Testamento," as he was about to leave for Angola).

Another striking similarity is the use of the same progression (I-v-VII-IV-I) in "Sueño con serpientes" and "Reino de todavía," whose Schenkerian graphs are pictured on Ex. 18. Not only do both songs have the same

⁶⁰ "Rosana" is about a Cuban woman leaving a lover to go far away, perhaps to the United States, possibly for economic reasons.

⁶¹ Also interesting is the choice of a blues setting for "Me quieren" (1996), where Rodríguez recounts the demands of enemies and fans alike.

harmonic progression, in mixolydian mode, but their melodies are also similar: they are both circular, with "Reino" starting and finishing on C# and "Sueño" on D, and both melodies fall by a third over the harmonies from v to I.⁶² Such close resemblance leaves one wondering how similar the meanings or sentiments behind these songs might have been. "Reino" speaks with a pessimistic air of encroaching capitalism and the difficulties of ordinary Cubans in the 1990s; "Sueño" speaks of life's struggles, as captured in a dream, in 1974. But of what kind of struggles was Rodríguez dreaming? How connected were these struggles to the situation in Cuba at the time, and how pessimistic did he feel regarding their resolution? Or turning to "Reino," how might he consider Cuban idealism and Cuba's relationship

with the United States as endless struggles? Rodríguez focused his reply on the question of composition, perhaps showing the connections, however unconscious, in sentiment:

Generalmente cuando lo que yo hacía se parecía a otra cosa, eso yo lo echaba. Y me quedaba nada más que no me parecía a nada. Me hace cuidado de mis propias canciones. Porque como tú bien sabes, es muy habitual que uno se fusila a uno mismo. En aparecer "Reino de todavía," me di cuenta que se parecía un poco. Yo creo que tomé algunas cuantas ideas de "Sueño con serpientes"; yo tomé algunos esquemas parecidos al de "Sueño con serpientes." Y traté de variar un poco la melodía, y di otras palabras y un coro diferente. Es que tenía urgencia en este momento por decir este discurso de "Reino de todavía"; tenía necesidades de escribir (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁶³

Ex. 18—"Reino de todavía" and "Sueño con serpientes," Comparison of Schenker graphs

REINO DE TODAVÍA

SUEÑO CON SERPIENTES

62 Some analysts may wonder why I have given VII a higher place in the hierarchy in "Reino de todavía" and IV in "Sueño con serpientes." In "Reino," the harmonies unfold over evenly-spaced four-measure phrases (see Ex. 15B). Using the designation of "strong" and "weak" measures as discussed by Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983), the moves to v and IV occur on the relatively weak third measure, while VII occurs on the relatively strong first measure. The higher hierarchy of VII is borne out by the ensuing tag line in the guitar. On the other hand, in "Sueño" (Ex. 12A), the entire progression takes place in a scant two measures and a downbeat. Here, the move to v is on a strong measure, while the move to VII takes place on a downbeat, but on a weak measure. Even though IV is not on a downbeat, I believe the chord stands out more in "Sueño" than in "Reino" because it is conjunct with the tonic in the context of a time-concentrated progression.

63 "Generally, when what I was composing resembled something else, I threw it out. And only what didn't resemble anything else remained. I pay attention to my own songs. Because as you know, one often shoots oneself. When I started working on "Reino de todavía," I took some ideas from "Sueño con serpientes." And I realized that they had some resemblance. I think I took some similar schematics from "Sueño con serpientes" and tried to vary the melody a bit, and I gave it different words and a different chorus. I had urgency in that moment to voice the discourse of "Reino de todavía"; I had to write."

Table 2 - Catalogue of Rodríguez's Musical Devices

Device	Metaphor, affect, purpose	Song	Date	Specifics
Structure:				
Multipartite	Differing points of view	Ese hombre	1967	Public view = ungrounded (V/G), his view = grounded (G=I)
	Differing emotions	Fusil contra fusil	1968	Mourning vs. rallying cry to carry on in Che's honor
	Different points of view	La era está pariendo un corazón	1968	Static verse-mourning; more dramatic chorus - Che's legacy
	"	Debo partirme en dos	1969	Rodríguez's narrative (Gm) vs. public's expectations (Bb major)
	Differing emotions	Ojalá	1969	D major/minor for remembering, C major for the wish to forget
	"	Aunque no esté de moda	1969	First three sections on wooing; chorus on paranoia
	Differing perceptions	Como esperando abril	1975	Fantasy/light in C, reality/blindness/darkness in Cm
	Differing subjects	La gaviota	1976	C# minor for dead soldier, E for seagull
	Differing points of view	Abracadabra	1992	Misused powers vs. singer's beliefs
	Differing emotions	El necio	1991	Resignation (Em, verse) vs. nostalgia (G, Chorus)
Strophic	One subject/message	Canción del elegido	1969	Abel Santamaría
		Playa Girón	1969	Writing one's own history
		Resumen de noticias	1970	Single message
		Oleo de mujer con sombrero	1970	Lost love
		Yo soy de donde hay un río	1980	Décima for grandfather
		Unicornio	1981	Loss
		Me quieren	1996	Demands of critics, fans
		Olivia	1999	Solitude
		Cita con ángeles	2003	Atrocities and assassinations
Harmonic devices obfuscating tonality				
Unresolved dominant	Unfinished situation	Debo partirme en dos	1969	Chorus, "Y no importa que luego me suspendan la función"
	Unanswered question	Aunque no esté de moda	1969	Phrase endings in F#, leading to Bm (Pre-chorus) or cycling back to F#m (Chorus--> Verse)

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Trans

Device	Metaphor, affect, purpose	Song	Date	Specifics
Structure:				
Deceptive cadence/ unexpected progression to minor	Change in focus from flight of seagull to death Pessimism	La gaviota La era está pariendo un corazón	1976 1968	Beginning of chorus Chorus, iii for "porvenir", "por vivir"
Rapidly shifting harmonies	Resignation	El necio	1991	Chorus: "Yo me muero como vivi"
	Turbulent/mixed emotions	Ojalá	1969	Verse
	Mixed emotions	Te doy una canción	1970	Chorus, shifting from F major to D minor
	Turbulent times	Al final de este viaje	1970	Bridge; diminished chord sequence prolongs the progression, iii-VI-I-II-V
	Excitement	Aunque no esté de moda	1969	Throughout song
Rapid shifts between unrelated tonalities	Shifting clouds, shifting perceptions	Como esperando abril	1975	Steps down by thirds
	Taking of life	La gaviota	1976	Chorus vacillates between F#m and E
	Fleetingness	Flores nocturnas	1991	Momentary non-diatonic, common tone progressions; Verse (D->G, Bm->Bb, D->F)
	Ungrounded, fluttering beings	Mariposas	1972	Verse: Bb-Ab-Fm, Pre-chorus: F-Bb
	Magic	La primera mentira	1969	Verse E-C#-Eb-C
Statement in dominant answered by statement in tonic	Macabre (Poe)	Trova de Edgardo	1992	C-Ab-F-Bb-G-C (vs. C-Am-F-G-C)
	Magic	Abracadabra	1992	Verse C-Eb; D-Ab-F-G-C (vs. Dm-Am-F)
	"Questionable" vs. "Grounded"	Ese hombre	1967	Beginning of Verse, "Ese hombre"
Simple harmonies/melodies Repeating progression	Triviality; parody	Debo partirme en dos	1969	Refrain, "Te quiero, mi amor"
	Anthem; concrete message	Resumen de noticias	1970	Defiance against censure; principles (I-V-vi-iii-IV-iii-II-V)
	Anthem; concrete message	Días y flores	1975	Anger (V-IV-I)
	Anthem; concrete message	Testamento	1975	Rally for soldiers (I-V-vi-IV-I-V; ii-VII-IV-I-V)
	Anthem; concrete message	Canción urgente para Nicaragua	1980	Praise for Sandinistas; anti-imperialism (I-V with bass filling in scale from A to E and back)
Double-plagal progression Double-plagal cadences/circle of fourths	Message	Cita con ángeles	2003	World atrocities and assassinations; I-V6-vi-V-ii-iii-V-IV-I-I (bVII-V65-I)
	Message	Me quieren	1996	Conflict with critics (I-IV-I-V-IV-I)
	Anthem	El necio	1991	Defiance, Chorus (G major: I-V-IV)
	Cycle of life/death	Al final de la segunda luna	1968	Beginning of verse (VI-III-VII-#)
	Reincarnation	Mariposas	1972	"Tu tiempo es ahora una mariposa" (VII-IV-I-V)
Never-ending struggle Admiration/enchantment	Never-ending struggle	Sueño con serpientes	1974	Double-plagal (I-v-VII-IV-I)
	Admiration/enchantment	Mujeres	1975	"Me han estremecido/un montón de mujeres" (B maj: I-V-VII-IV); "Pero lo que me ha estremecido/hasta perder casi el sentido/son tus ojitos divinos" (E maj: VII-IV-I)
	Memories	Hoy mi deber	1979	Circle of fourths (VI-III-VII-IV), as reminiscences about lover
	Never-ending situation	Reino de todavía	1996	Verse, double-plagal (I-v-VII-IV-I)
	Secrets	Y tantos huesos chocarán	1999	Refrain (bIII-bVII-IV-I)

Device	Metaphor, affect, purpose	Song	Date	Specifics
Structure:				
Plagal cadences	Reality, weariness	Y nada más	1965	Verse: "la brisa vieja/de por la mañana," "un caudal de siglos/por viejos caminos" (VII-VI-III-iv-i)
	Dissatisfaction	Ese hombre	1967	"se cuida de sí, se cuida de él solo" (I-V-IV-I)
	Anger over injustice	Días y flores	1974	Chorus, over "la rabia" (V-IV-I)
	Solitude, passing the time	Olivia	1999	V-IV-I
	Tragedies	Cita con ángeles	2003	V-IV-I, followed by bVII-V65-I
Static bass line	Resignation	La era está pariendo un corazón	1968	Verse
	Resignation	El necio	1991	Verse
	Sentimentality	Esta canción	1967	"Me he dado cuenta de que miento" (III-viio7-i)
Diminished/chromatic applied dominants or neighbor/passing chords				
Chromatically declining bass, outlining i to III6 (A to E)	Message	La maza	1979	Verse
	Message	Con un poco de amor	1986	Chorus
Chromatically declining bass from I to V (A to E)				
Modal mixture				
Chromatic substitutions	Provocation	Debo partirme en dos	1969	bill (Ab), Verse
	Magic, confusion	Abracadabra	1992	D-Ab-F, rather than Dm-Am-F in verse
	Magic, confusion	La primera mentira	1969	Verse (E-C#-Eb-C-A)
	Confusing times, detours	Al final de este viaje	1970	Pauses on nondiatonic harmonies (bVI, VI)
Nondiatonic progressions				
Major-minor substitution				
I for i, Picardy third				
V/V for ii				
VI for vi				
IV for iv				
Minor-major substitution				
iv for IV				
iv for IV				
iv for IV				
Melodic devices				
Leaps, arpeggios in melody				

Device	Metaphor, affect, purpose	Song	Date	Specifics
Structure:				
Bass pedal supporting:	Resignation	El necio	1991	Verse
Monotone/chromatically	Resignation	La era está pariendo un corazón	1968	Verse
Chromatically declining accompaniment	Resignation	Ojalá	1969	Verse
Chromatically rising harmony: melody in octaves to bass	Excitement	Aunque no esté de moda	1969	Lift
melody in fifths to bass	Paranoia	Aunque no esté de moda	1969	Chorus
Antecedent-consequent, different keys	Two sides of same emotion	Te doy una canción	1970	Chorus, shifting from F major to D minor
Trivial melody	Banality	Debo partirme en dos	1969	Refrain; simple I-vi-IV-V harmony; melody follows bass line
Melody outlining scale descent	Certainty	Abracadabra	1992	"Yo no se/si el mal tiempo trae mala fe... un colibri"
	Resolve, confidence	Al final de este viaje	1970	Refrain: "Quedamos los que puedan sonreír"
Undulating melody	Uncertainty, magic	Abracadabra	1992	Verse

Conclusion

When I met Rodríguez, he told me that he found it interesting that I was studying his harmonic patterns, as most writers had concentrated on his lyrics. Despite the evidence to the contrary, he does not consider himself a musician, but a “writer of songs”:

Realmente el estudio más profundo musical no lo hice nunca. Realmente no puedo decir que soy músico. Soy un autor de canciones que apenas sabe lo suficiente para escribir sus propias canciones, arreglar por unos instrumentos, pero con mucha dificultad. Puedo seguir una partitura, pero leer una partitura, me cuesta mucho trabajo. Todo yo canto es lo que he oído en la cabeza (Rodríguez 2006, interview).⁶⁴

He thus seemed surprised when I described certain elements of his style that I had discovered— “¿Tú crees que yo tengo un estilo?”⁶⁵—and was eager to hear of more examples. While he employs some musical patterns deliberately (e.g., repeating progressions for anthems), more often, he does not choose them consciously but out of inspiration, and he then works to fashion a surprise out of a sequence or add a chord or inflection that could provide a setting for some words (Rodríguez 2006, interview).

I believe that this method, however unconsciously, has resulted in a style that has remained remarkably consistent in its use of certain harmonic and melodic patterns to depict emotions and states, as has been demonstrated in this article. Moreover, many of these devices are similar to the topoi in the classical music that the songwriter admires; such devices include the use of chroma-

tic harmonies to show turbulence or excitement, diatonic harmonies and descending *Urlinie* for clarity, a question and response set in dominant vs. tonic, and monotone melodies depicting resignation. While some aspects of classical music were taught at ICAIC, Rodríguez likely absorbed some of these concepts through listening to classical music or popular music that was influenced by it, such as the songs of Sindo Garay or the Beatles. These artists had also used the modal mixture and chromatic modulations also seen in nineteenth century art song and reflected in Rodríguez’s songs. A subject for further research would be a general study of the transfer of musical patterns and topoi between classical music and traditional and popular musics.

Furthermore, the eclecticism of Rodríguez’s influences is an example of the syncretic nature of global popular musics, which often blend elements of local traditional musics with the latest in popular music from elsewhere in the world. In the early Rodríguez song “Fusil contra fusil,” a 1960s-rock style was combined with a *tresillo* rhythm in the bass for an elegy to a Revolutionary hero, whereas in the Special Period, Rodríguez turned to traditional Cuban styles to set songs alluding to domestic problems. A closer reading of these musical blends, looking at how musical patterns of influential popular musicians are reinterpreted outside of their countries and in other languages, would yield interesting results. Finally, Rodríguez’s influence on the musical language of further generations of Latin songwriters would be worthy of investigation.

64 “I’ve never really studied music deeply. I can’t really say I’m a musician. I’m a songwriter who hardly knows enough to write down his own songs and make arrangements for a few instruments, but with great difficulty. I can follow a score, but to read a score takes a lot out of me. All I sing is what I’ve heard in my head.” Rodríguez was interested to learn that none of the Beatles read music during their tenure as a group (Everett 1999: viii).

65 “You think I have a style?”

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